W O R S H I P



By

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PREFACE

These days religion is looked upon as a bugbear. Yet mankind has not been able to give up religiosity. To banish religion is one thing; to try to free it from the bondage of pretenders quite another. We entirely agree with the view of the great modern scientist Max Planck *that the religious element in his nature must be recognised and cultivated if all the powers of the human soul are to act together in perfect balance and harmony.* True religiosity is the only bed-rock on which the great fabric of human progress can be built in safety. It is to expound this view that the books of the Religious Renaissance Series are being written.

-GANGA PRASAD UPADHYAYA

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CHAPTER I

WORSHIP AND RELIGION

'Worship' is too well-known a word to need definition. At least at this stage it will not be advisable to embarrass the reader with the logical complexities of art of defining. Suffice to say that every sane man knows what worship is.

Worship is an important department of religion. Some persons go even so far as to hold that religion is worship and worship is religion. The secular and therefore the commonest view is that whatever does not directly pertain to worship is beyond the pale of religion. But even those who think that religion is co-extensive with life acknowledge the importance of worship. If you examine closely the religious life of any people, you will find there a good deal about worship. A man who does not worship at all, is not religious at all.

For being religious it is not necessary to believe in God. This sounds paradoxical. But there are religions existing in the world which do not profess to have a belief in God. Those who have devoted some

time to the classification of religions have discovered at least two religions which boldly and openly repudiate theism in all its forms. They are Buddism and Jainism. Some researchists have tried to prove that Buddhists and Jainas are also theists; at least their scriptures prove so. It may be, we are not concerned here with what the Jainas or the Buddists ought to believe consistently with their scriptures or traditions. We mean to say that the best Jainas and the best Buddhists claim that they believe in no such creator governor of the Universe as other religionists call God. Thus there are two kinds of religions, theistic and nontheistic. But one thing is common to both these classes and that is worship. The Jainas do worship. So do the Buddhists. Whom do they worship if they do not believe in God ? That is the question which it is not our concern to answer, nor even to analyse at this stage. We know that the Jainas worship and do so without believing in God. The Buddhists have also the same claim. It is only the atheists that do not worship. Thus atheism is not contradictory to theism, but to religion. The non-theism of the Jainas and the Buddhists is not identical with atheism or even agnosticism. Whether you believe in God or not, you are religious as long as you worship.

Religion makes a man look to something be-

yond his death, something beyond the everyday routine of life-eating, drinking, sleeping etc. There is something mysterious about religion. Similary there is something mysterious about 'worship' too. Every form of worship has two sides, one external or visibel and the other internal and therefore inexplicable. And the latter is more important. For instance, a worshipper bows his head at the altar of a God. He puts some offerings before the image. These are common actions. But what makes the whole process worship is not the physical act of bending the head or putting libation at a particular place. The real thing is something mysterious which even the worshipper is unable to analyse or explain. A Hindu passerby passes by a temple and as soon as he comes face to face to the building, he folds his hands or bows his head a little and then goes on. If you catechise him on the point he will smile and be silent. He does not know what he has done, why he has done or what fruit the action will bring him. Possibly he may not be knowing what particular deity the temple holds But he knows that it is worship. It is something inexplicable. Something awful and mysterious that he feels. This is worship. When a Jaina is performing his worship in his temple, he is not worshipping God. He believes in no God. But still he is worshipping something which

he can partly explain and partly not. One thing is common there. The same mysterious awfulness that fills the heart of a monotheist when he has no image before him, or an idolator when he is bowing his head before an image, is also present in the mind of a Buddhist or a Jaina who is a non- believer in the existence of an Intelligent Purposeful Creator of the Universe. This awfulness is the main factor of worship, and the most determining factor in the form of worship. This is the common standpoint of all worshippers and can be a safe starting point for all deliberations on the subject of worship.

CHAPTER II

FORM OF WORSHIP

The frist thing that strikes one is the multiplicity of forms of worship. The forms of worship current in the world are so many and so varied that it is extremely difficult to bring about a reconciliation between them. Most of the religious feuds which have darkened the human history have risen from this difference in forms of worship. A man is performing yoga with erect sitting posture and eyes closed, contemplating on the attributes of God. It is one form. Another man is bowing his head before an idol. It is another. A third man is bending his head before a tree and putting some sandal marks on its trunk. This is also worship. A fourth man is sacrificing a goat's head on an altar and besmearing the image with blood. This is also worship.[1] A Tibetan is busy with revolving his prayer wheel, so that the revolutions made may be

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1 "Man has worshipped everything on earth, including himself, stones, hills, flowers, trees, streams, wells, ocean and animals. He has worshipped everything he could think of beneath the earth, metals, caves, serpents and

written to his credit in the Book of Deeds. That is also worship. Which is the correct form of worship and which not is a question.

Some persons have tried to solve the knot by supposing that all forms are the same or have the same result. Just as all rivers fall into the same ocean, similarly all worships are acceptable to God. God wants heart and not form. Whatever form you may adopt, as long as your heart is in your maker, the form is immaterial, But that is only one view, a very superficial view and a view held by a very few persons. The history of different forms of worship shows that this view is not universal. The difference of forms is not a spontaneous growth. It has come into existence through some cause. When one form of worship was found to be wrong or useless or pernicious or deficient, it was replaced by a better substitute. In this way there arose many forms and holders of these forms began to fight for the superiority of the form to which they were adherents.

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under world ghosts. Finally, he has worshipped everything between earth and heaven and everything in the heavens above, mist, wind, cloud, rain-bow, stars, moon, sun, the sky itself, though only in part has he worshipped the spirits of all these objects."
(origin and Evolution of Religion by Hopkins, P.-13.)

Thus the originators, supporters and followers of the forms neither ever held, nor hold the view that other forms are as good as theirs. They quareelled when they gave birth to these forms, they quarrelled when the forms thus born came into competition with the other forms, and they quarrel when other forms come into being. It is only the neutrals, the passers-by, the let-alone-rs, the ones who were never serious about any forms, that come forward with their cheap conciliatory advice that all forms are the same and that they should not be a cause of quarrel. It call this advice cheap because the people who give it, do so not because they think all forms equally important, but because they think no form important at all, nor even the idea that works behind those forms. They appear to be *for all,* while in fact they are *for none.* All rivers fall into the same ocean. True. But only if they flow into the same direction, and at different places too. The analogy is more delusory and highly misleading. The forms prevalent are so diverse, so contradictory and so antagonistic that sometimes there is nothing common between them and to expect that they would all lead to the same destination is a self delusion of the most dangerous type.

Some persons argue in another way. They do not say that all forms are equally efficacious for all.

What they say is that all forms have a psycholocical justification and therefore to quarrel about them is trivial. As different persons have different angles of vision or different ways of thinking, it is natural for them to have recourse to different forms. No two persons have the same form of nose or ears or eyes. Then why should they have same form of worship? But the analogy does not carry us very far. First of all, if you closely analyse these forms, they do not show that they are different aspects of the *same thing observed at different angles.* In a very few exceptional cases they may, but generally, they do not. For instance, a worshipper ready to sacrific an animal or even a human being in order to appease the wrath of his God and another person respecting all kinds of life with the object of pleasing his maker are not seeing the same relity from different angles. Not only are, their places of observation different, but their objects of observation are also different. It is true that the observers are at different levels of human progress and therefore, their proclivities are also different. But if they are allowed to have their own way and nobody disturbs them, their level will never rise, and they will never be able to observe the correct thing at a correct angle. If a child makes a mistake in a primary class, surely there is a psychological justi-

fication for such a mistake. He does so, not intentionally, but because the level of his progress is so low. But surely there is no justification whatsoever for his teachers or friends to leave him there and not to save him from the delusion. If I follow a wrong from of worship, I do so because of my ignorance. I do not deserve punishment. But it does not follow that I should be left to wallow in the mud of my ignorance and that others who are occupying a higher level should not save me from following the wrong path. To *punish* me for my ignorance is unfair. But to *pity* me and to *run* for my help is not only not unfair, but an unavoidable duty on the part of those who are more fortunately placed. This thing has been excellently put in the Bhagvad Gita, Chapter XVIII. There the intellect has been classified into three kinds, *satviki* or pure, *Rajasi* or muddled and *Tamasi* or blunt.

O! Arjuna, that intellect is Satviki or transparent which sees clearly what should be desired and what not; what should be done and what not, what should be feared and what not, what is bondage and what release.

O! Arjuna, that intellect is muddled or translucent which does not clearly say what duty is and what not, or what should be done and what not.

O! Arjuna, that intellect is Tamasi or Opaque which is engrossed in darkness and sees the wrong

as right and all objects differently from what they really are.

Those who inflict *sameness* upont widely different forms and ignore or refuse to observe their difference belong to the second type of intellect. They think that by doing so they will be able to end the quarrel. But they leave the rood-cause untouched and worsen the disease.

The best way is that we should examine these forms or at least encourage such examination. There is no sense in the avoidance of such examination. You

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प्रवृतिं च निवृतिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये।

बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी।।

(XVIII-30)

यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च।

अयथावत् प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी।।

(XVIII-31)

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता।

सर्वार्थान् विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी।।

(XVIII-32)

cannot wean people from all forms of worships. That is impossible. Worship is a part and parcel of one's nature. you cannot allow differences to go on. They have already made the world so miserable. You cannot shut your eyes against the difference. Your doing so does not cure the disease; you simply shirk you duty Then why not boldly face the situation and help those who can be helped ?

Perhaps you fear that your share in the examination will endanger the peace of the world. But you forget that the peace of the world is already in danger. If the surgeon fears to probe the boil for fear of increasing pain, he is undutiful. The little pain that you are causing is to bring about an abiding cure and should not be exaggerated. Some persons are sceptic about the efficacy of such examination. They ask, "Do you think that you can ever bring the world to the same form of worship?" Our answer is that our duty is to try. It is possible to correct some. Some grey sheep can be made white. You show the lamp. Those who have eyes and cannot see on account of darkness will welcome your help. Those whose eyes are too dim to make a proper use of your light may go their older ways. Leave them to their fate or for better hands. But do not fail to save those whom you can. Your examination of the forms of worship may

lead to any of the three courses. It is possible that some forms may be superficially different. This difference may be local or geographical or circumstantial Leave that alone, but only after examining it and having satisfied yourself that it is not basic. Then, the difference may be mixed up with sameness. There are cases when certain foreign element creeps in and causes mischief. In that case, a slight incision will be necessary. The chaff is to be removed from the gain. Then again, the differences may be fundamental. In this last case, overhauling is necessary and it is a sin to fear it. Such cases are too numerous to be ignored and need a thorough thrashing. It is fatal to belittle them. The weeds that impede the healthy growth of desirable plants must go, or the whole garden will become a wild and mischievous forest.

CHAPTER III
THE MAIN OBJECT

Worship is not the *end of religion, nor of life.* it is simply a *means* of evolving our potentialities and seeking a higher level of existence. We worship God, not for his sake, but for our own. It is a mistake to suppose that our worshipping God glorifies Him. Such a statement is a gross blasphemy. God is self-glorified. He needs no glorification, nor our supplications can add an iota to His glory. *We worship God to better ourselves.*

But how does this betterment come about? People have generally a gross misconception about it. They appear to think that our worship please God and He in return for such a pleasure bestows upon ourselves, in some mysterious way, something which we may call betterment. We give him a commodity and he gives us another in return. This is no worship. It is bartering.

Worship is a training. Just as a in a school the teacher does not give knowledge to the student in return for certain practices, but the student has to undergo certain training which is itself education, similary the worshipper, while worshipping feels that he is rising higher and higher and that the fruit of

worship he is already receiving in the form of training he is undergoing. He ought to expect no wages for the action. Let us have an illustration. Suppose I walk to a certain place in the morning. This may take place in two ways. First somebody sends me there for a particular purpose and when I have done this errand, he pays me a certain sum for my labour. This is one way. Or I may go with the sole purpose of exercise. This is the other way. In the former case, the reward expected or given is external to the practice. In the latter the practice itself is a reward. In the former, the object is to get money which has nothing to do with the form of the work. I could have done some other work, enjoined by my employer if he had promised the same sum. But in the latter the object is to move the limbs in a particular way, so that they may be developed. In this case every step of the process is a realisation of the object; in that case, when the work is finished and we are paid, we realise the object.

Worship too may take any one of the above forms. It may consist of some rituals done to please the deity in the expectation that the deity so pleased will give us something which may be useful for us in our life. in this case the work done and the reward expected are foreign to each other, just as money and

walking in the foregoing example. The form of worship is determined with reference to the object of worship. The worshipper is doing something with the consciousness that the work to be done is required by the deity, and that as he has satisfied the deity, the deity would be pleased to give him the desired object.

Or the worshipper way do a certain thing or practice with reference to himself. In this case the reward is not foreign to the work done. The work itself is the reward. The object of the worshipper's desire is not something else, but the work itself. He has not to wait. The reward accompanies the action itself. I call this latter the real worship. The former is mere bartering. It is no worship at all. It is sham, nay, it is an usurper. It springs from an idea which is woefully erroneous. It presupposes that the deity has some particular needs of its own and if those needs are supplied through our agency it would pay us for the service we have rendered. The difference in the two forms is not trifling or apparent. It is vital and obvious. They are fundamentally different. In the former the relation between the worshipper and the worshipped is that of the employee, and the employer. In the latter the worshipper does everything from his own point. It is he who needs a certain training and

his sole object of approaching the deity is to obtain that training. The approach itself is training. The deity desires nothing for itself, it needs nothing. The worshipper's every step is a realisation of the object of his desire. It is more akin to physical exercise, every movement of which is the action as well as the fruit of the action. It is development, it is evolution. The sowing of the seed, the germination of the plant, its growth, its flowering, and its fructification are all a continuity which breaks nowhere. The fruit does not come from outside. It is not a crown made by a smith elsewhere, and put on the king's head. It is just like the hair of the head which has grown out of the head itself and is inseparably connected with the growth of the head.

Worship in order to be real worship should be a growth and not an infliction. It should start from the very nature of the worshipper and not from the need, nature or desire of the deity.

It does not, of course, mean that the deity should play no part. The very nature of the deity is a magnet that draws the worshipper towards itself. But in order to be drawn, there ought to be a capacity. It is not everything that the magnet draws. There is a special affinity between the magnet and the iron which is not found between the magnet and a piece of wood. The magnet has, no doubt, a capacity to draw. But the piece of wood has no *capacity to be drawn.* It had in

fact, no affinity with the magnet and refuses to be drawn. Similarly every worshipper has a capacity of his own. The deity would not drag him towards itself by force. If it had done so, all persons should have been on the same level of worship and divine communion should have been the lot of all. But obviously, it is not the case. The worshipper has to develop his capacity to be drawn. He has to imbibe that affinity. He is a piece of wood. He has to become a piece of iron. Perhaps the example of wood is too clumsy. Let us change it a little in order to clarify the issue. Let us suppose the worshipper to be a piece of iron buried in a heap of dirt, which thwarts the action of the magnet. Let this dirt go off so that the attraction of the magnet may work freely. The latent affinity of the worshipper with the magnetic affinity of the deity has to be roused, to be brought on the surface. Worship is a process of removing this dirt, and rousing the latent capacity of the worshipper to be drawn towards the deity.

The vedic scriptures have divided worship into three divisions: (I) *Stuti* (स्तुति) (2) *Prarthana* (प्रार्थना) (3)*Upasana* (उपासना) They to a great extent correspond to the triple division of religious life into jana kanda (ज्ञान काण्ड) , Karma Kanda (कर्म काण्ड) and

upasana Kanda (उपासना काण्ड) Broadly speaking worship and life are coextensive. Worship is life and life is worship. For, what is life? Unfolding of latent capacities of the self. And what is worship? The same unfolding. But ritually, worship has been used in a narrow sense. It is a preparation for the bigger field of action. It is a nursery where young seelings have to be nurtued before they are able to face the brunt of the wider field. Worship, in order to be real worship, ought to be a real preparatory ground for life. Worship and life should be inter-connected. They act and react.

CHAPTER IV
CORRESPONDENCE OF WORSHIP AND LIFE

In the foregoing chapter, we have made a mention of the triple division of worship and life. Let us see now, how and how far they correspond with each other.

Stuti (स्तुति) is the contemplation of the attributes of the Deity. These attributes are exhibited in the universe as well as in our life. We contemplate upon them, because they have a bearing upon our life, and as our life is connected with the life of other things in the Universe, therefore, upon the rest of the Universe too. For example, we feel that the eye with which we see is the result of God's most excellent workmanship- skill and intelligence both. This eye is interconnected with the sun, in nature as well as in utility. Without the sun, the eye is helpless and without the eye, the sun superfluous. Our eye is meant for ourselves only. You cannot see with my eye, nor I with yours. But my eye and your eye both see with the help of the sun, which is, so to speak, the Universal eye. This my individual eye on my forehead and the universal eye, the sun, both proclaim that there is

some invisible existence which is most superbly intelligent and skillful and most highly benevolent. This intelligence and this benevolence of the Deity are highly impressive and fill us with awe and reverence. The more we contemplate, the more we are drawn towards it, and the more we are drawn towards it, The more we come to relize its attributes. We begin to think of them and sing them. There is a chain of process, each link contributing to the strength of another. This is all stuti. You can call it meditation.

What is *stuti* in worship, is *jnana* or Knowledge in life. To know means to know the laws that govern nature. A scientific man knows well what knowledge means. His life is devoted to the discovery of these laws. But even an uncivilized and uneducated person's knowledge in nothing but the knowledge of these laws, without the conscieousness that these are laws of nature. Every child's life begins with the discovery of these laws. In this respect he is akin to the scientist, of course, in a limited sense. Thus we see that there is similarity between *stuti* and *Jnana* or meditation and knowledge. An ordinary uneducated man knows the laws and the objects upon which these laws operate, promiscuously, without the ability to abstract the laws. The scientist has the capacity of abstracting these laws. For him, the laws begin to stand in bold relief, apart from the cases

which these laws pervade. This is science.

But the scientist does not care to refer these laws to the great intelligence that governs them. He stops short. For him, these laws are all in all. He is shy of proceeding further. His analysis of the objects of the world has given him the knowledge of these laws. He does not synthesise these laws. The worshipper in his *stuti* or contemplation synthesises whatever laws he has discovered and sees behind these laws an invisible Governor of them. The scientist discovered the governors of the objects of the worlds in the form of the laws of nature. The worshipper discovers the Governor of these governors, *Visvasya misato vari*[1] the controller of all that moves. Thus there is a close parallelism between worship and life, each deriving a meaning from the other. Life without worship is incomplete and worship without life meaningless. This idea has been beautifully expressed in one of the hymns of the Antharva Veda.

The Verse runs thus:

"Whoever knows the pervading thread (law) in which are interwoven the great objects of the world, whoever knows the thread of that thread (the law of that law), he knows the great God."[2]

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1 विश्वस्य मिषतो वशी। (ऋग्वेद 10/190/2)

2 यो विद्यात् सूत्रं विततं यस्मिन्नोताः प्रजा इमाः।
सूत्रं सूत्रस्य यो विद्यात स विद्याद् स विद्याद् ब्राह्मणं महत्।।
(अथर्ववेद 10-8-37)

The second part of worship is *prarthana* (प्रार्थना) or supplication, and parallel to it in life is action. All knowledge leads to action. All science leads to art. Inventions are the result of scientific investigations. The meditation of God's attributes creates in us desire to work. We begin to imitate. He is the creator. Our contemplation of His creatorship creates in us a love for this attribute and we desire to be creators. We cry for His help. We ask from Him the objects which we need, but which we do not appear to possess. This is supplication or *prarthana*. Just as all action reacts upon knowledge, all art reacts upon science, similary all *prarthana* reacts upon *stuti*. The more we spread our hands before Him for help, the more we begin to think of His Greatness and our meditation grows deeper and deeper.

This brings us to the third part of worship, *upasana* (उपासना) or communion, better called at-one-ment. Meditation and supplication both acting and reacting draw us close to the object of worship. We begin to feel the nearness, the close kinship between ourselves and Him whom we worship. We appear to be one with him. This is communion or realisation. This is the end of all worship, all life. Here worship and life become one. This is bliss. In

secular life there is nothing parallel to this *upasana*. The ordinary life has only two factors, knowledge and action, following one another in quick succession, discoveris leading to inventions and inventions spurring to further discoveries, too quick to leave any margin for the zest which is the salt of life. A trader begins to trade for the sake of money. The money he gets from the trade spurs him to pursue the trade further. The more moneyed he is, the more he feels the appetite for trade. Thus he finds himself deeply engrossed in trade and money. From money to trade and from trade to money. He is a prisoner within the circle. No enjoyment: except that little which trade and money give him. No release, no bliss. This is the way of the world. This is worldliness.

Worship takes the man further. It brings to him bliss, the bliss which his inner self most needs. The trader began his trade for the sake of money. But he needed money not for money's sake, but for enjoyment's sake. The money was a means to him and not an end. But in a course of time the trader became so engrossed in his trade that money and trade both became the end. He forgot altogether the enjoyment for which he wanted money and started trade. But if he is wise and keeps the end in view. Then trade and money both will give his life a peculiar zest, a sort of

self-satisfaction, a goal in life. Similarly, if knowledge and action bring man the consciousness that his self is closely connected with a Higher Self, the secularity of his life merges into religiosity. He becomes religious. Worship and life which ran so far parallel to each other begin to converge and become one.

This is possible only when worship is true i.e., When there is a close relation between worship and life.

CHAPTER V
ANTAGONISM -A DISEASE

This Universe is one harmonious whole. Its different parts have a peculiar adjustment with each other. Sometimes we speak of a material world, a moral world, a spiritual world, a social world, and so on, as if there are several separate worlds having nothing whatsoever to do with each other. But this is only due to limitations of our mentality and those of our language. Really speaking, matter, spirit, society are so interwoven that we cannot think of one without others. Spirit is a part of the Universe, just as matter is.

Our life too is a smaller universe, a unit by itself but still a part of the highter universe. This too has its matter and its spirit, both inseparably woven. And therefore it is that our worship, which is mainly a spiritual action. should be connected with our material life. In fact, it is a mistake to call any life material. Wherever there is life, howsoever low its plane, there is spirit. Matter is simply a vehicle through which the spirit. Matter is simply a vehicle through

which the spirit expresses itself. *Sarvam tasya up-Vyakhyanam*[1] The whole life is only an explanation (expansion) of this self.

A charge has often been brought against 'worship' that it creates a cleavage between the worshipper and the worldly life. They say that all religious persons are wrecks from worldly point of view. They are lost to the family, lost to the nation and lost to the world at large. The charge is by no means unfounded. It is significant of the mentality of the worshippers as well as of that of critics. In fact the forms of worships current in the world have rightly exposed themselves to this charge. The custodians of religions have given people to understand that the best religiosity consists in the renunciation of the world, as if, either God did not mean to make the world for us, but for somebody else and it is only by mistake that we have been thrown therein, or He made it to make our path of progress more difficult. Neither of the views is correct. The world we are in, is for us, for our help. It is not an obstacle in our path. It is a help. Therefore there should be no antagonism between the religious life and the worldly life. The real worldly life ought to be imbued with religiosily. The real religious life should be a success from worldly point

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1 सर्व तस्योपव्याख्यानम्-- माण्डूक्य- उपनिषत्।

too.

The antagonism that we find between worship and life is due to the erroneous conception of both. Life is not to be shunned and spurned but to be lived. The real living of life means the harmonious living, the adjustment between different parts.

All religions believe that God is good. They also believe that it is He who made the world. Now, if you believe that the world is not for our help, but to mislead us, surely you bring a serious charge against your maker. Either He is good and not the maker of the world, or the maker of the world, but not good. Where is there consistency? We have already shown that the world, we live in, proves beyond doubt that it is for us and shows the extreme goodness of its maker. Therefore the very thought of the maker, or of the purpose why he has made it, necessitates that there ought to be correspondence between our religious duties and our worldly activities. Worship is a religious duty. Therefore this should be connected with life. Nay, worship should help worldliness. The best worshipper must be the best liver of life, the best member of his family, the truest citizen of his country of nation, the most excellent part of the world. If by virtue of being a worshipper of God he has become unfit for the family, country or the

world, surely there is something wrong with his form of worship. He has taken to a wrong path. It is not the world that he needs renouncing. His foremost duty is to scrutinize his ways and renounce the worship which has produced in his mind a chagrin for the world.

Visnoh karmani pasyata
Yato vratani paspase,
Indrasya yujyah sakha 1 (Rg Veda)

"Look at the works of God, from which alone you can derive your inspirations, as he is the fittest friend of the soul"

The works of God are this world. It is the great teacher, the best guide. To play our part in the world is the truest religion. It is through the performance of our worldly duties that our potentialites are materialised, and worship gives us the fitness to performs these duties creditably. Selfishness and cowardice are the two main causes of our failure in life, and it is the function of worship to remove these

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1 विष्णोः कर्माणि पश्यत, यतो व्रतानि पस्पशे।
इन्द्रस्य युज्यः सखा। (ऋग्वेद 1/22/19)

shortcomings.

CHAPTER VI
WHOM TO WORSHIP

A young friend (A) onec asked the writer (B), "Whom should we worship? God or our country?" This led to the following conversation:-

B. "What do you mean by worshipping your country? Do you propose to bow down before your hills? or your rivers?"

A. "No, certainly not, I mean to worship my country *i.e.,* my country men."

B. "Very laudable indeed. But how would you worship your country men? Will you bow down before them severally or jointly, just as common people do before Gods and Goddesses in their temples."

A. "No, no, I don't mean that."

B. "Then, will you meditate upon the attributes of your country men, just as devotees contemplate upon the attributes of God?"

A. "By no means, you misunderstand me or at least joke with me".

B. "Neither of these, my friend. I do not joke. I am serious. Nor I misunderstand you. My purpose of putting these questions is simply to show you that

you misunderstand *yourself.* You never analysed your mind when you vaguely said that you propose to worship your country, or your country men. What, pray, do you mean by worship"?

A. "I mean to *serve* my country men."

B. "So *worship* means *service.* You wish to ask whether you should serve your country men or God?"

A. "Yes, surely. That is my question."

B. "But, then one thing ought to be clear. Do your service of God and your service of the country men mean the same thing? When you serve a man, what do you mean by service?"

A. "To render to him whatever help he needs. It is so very plain. Is it not?"

B. "Not so plain as you think. A minute's thinking on your part will justify my questioning. You just said what when you serve a man, you mean to help him in his needs? Did you not?"

A."Yes, I did, I mena so."

B. " Well, Then, what do you mean when you worship your God or serve him? Do you mean to help in removing his wants?"

A. "No, no, that will be ridiculous. God does not need my help."

B. "So your worshipping God is not the same

thing as your worshipping your country men."

A. "It seems so."

B. "Now you see the purpose of my questioning. Did you not misunderstand yourself? Were you not vague when you used the two words 'Worship' and 'Service'?"

A. "Yes, I was; now I see the difference. To serve the country means to help the countrymen in raising their statues, in satisfying their wants, in removing their shortcomings. Worship of God cannot mean that."

B. "So it is quite clear that service of the country means to render to it the help it needs. And worship of God means to seek His help in raising your status, in removing your shortcomings. When you serve your country you *give something* to it. When you worship your God, you *want* something *from* Him. The two processes are not the same. They point quite otherwise."

A. "Yes, I see my mistake. To substitute "God" for the 'country' in the service of the country or to substitute 'Country' for 'God' in the worship of God is ridiculous."

B. Surely. It conveys no meaning. It is mischievous too, as it misleads young men. *We should serve the country as well as worship God. God and*

country are not rivals.

A. "But does not the service of man mean the worship of God? I should deem it the best form of worship."

B. "not exactly. These are two different duties, distinct in their nature and equally distinct in their objective, though supplementary to each other."

A. "I could not follow you."

B. "I mean that worshipping God is not the same thing as serving the country, Though worship of God makes us the fittest to serve our country and service of our country fulfils one of the objects of worship. A true devotee cannot sit idly when he sees his fellow men in misery. A true servant of his country keeps himself un-equipped or illequipped if he does not worship his maker. A man who worships his God without serving his fellow beings is like a miser who tries to amass wealth without spending a single pie on charity. This selfishness is a disqualification in his fitness for worship. He is a hypocrite and can never be successful in his attempt to please his maker or to raise his spiritual level. A man who serves his fellow beings without worshipping God is like a pauper who wants to be charitable without trying to earn. His stock of inner strength which keeps a man up at the time of difficulty and temptations will fail and

one day he will find himself stranded, unable to help himself or his fellow beings. History is full of godless philanthropists, who though well-intentioned, could not save themselves or others from dangerous pit-falls. Their misguided zeal did more abiding harm than good to humanity"1

A. "But what about the worship of humanity?"

B. "Well I must first know your meaning. It is dangerous to talk in the air."

A. "Have you heard of Auguste Comte and his positivism?"

B. "I have, but what of that? Tell me pointedly what you mean."

A. Comte combined in his thought the two tendencies ---that of respect for religion and distrust for theology. In his opinion, the progress of human knowledge passed through three stages, the theological, the philosophical, and the positive or scientific. It was, he held, now plain that the only knowledge open to man is the positive knowledge of science, and that all doctrines of God must be dismissed as probably illusory. Yet the riligious impulses of mankind were of the first importance

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1 The actual dialogue ends here. But it has been prolonged to clear other points.

and essential to social progress. He proposed therefore as a substitute for Deity the grand Etre Humanity, as the object of devotion and worship. Let us transfer the religious emotions from the Deity of the traditional religion to the conception of humanity as a whole. For purposes of devotion Comte allowed the use of the images and examples of particular individuals who had contributed to progress or exemplified in a striking manner idea human qualities."[1]

B. " As regards the use of the images we shall speak later. Let us confine the discussion to the worhsip of humanity.

"The creed and cult, as Comte conceived them, have ceased to be of any importance. The system has suffered from two defects .... First, the idea of Humanity as an object of worship opens up insolubel difficulties. Humanity, as we know it, does not appear worthy of worship, and if we amend our creed to indicate that we worship idealized humanity, we are confronted with the somewhat remarkable demand that we should worship what, in the

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1 The Idea of God -An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion by W.R. Mathews in "An outline of Modern Knowledge," P. 65.

theory of positivism itself, does not exist and it, moreover, incapabel of being adequately described. Secondly, the idea that scientific knowledge is alone positive has suffered serious damage through the progress of science itself ....it is by no means the case that scientific theories raise no problems about the nature of things on the contrary, research leads to these problems. There is also greave difference of opinion among students of natural science concerning the statues of scientific knowledge. It is maintained by may that science can never be more than an abstract and descriptive series of formulas. There is therefore a need for philosophy in some deeper sense than a synthesis of the result of science, which was the humble role assigned to it by Comte"[1].

I have already said about your worship of mankind and the difference between service and worship. To worship idealized humanity, *i.e.*, The humanity which does not exist, but which we wish to come into existence in a course of time, is too imaginary to be possible. It is much beyond the scope of *practical living.* You are talking of a thing which you can never do. *Idealized humanity is* the humanity which exists

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1 Ibid. pp. 65-67

in your idea only. Different minds may have different ideas and therefore different idealized humanities. Do you mean to propose that you should worship the creatures of your own brain? What will it lead to?"

A. "You hit too hard, our ideals are not our creatures, certainly not the creatures of our fancy. They are something higher, that draw us towards themselves, they lift us up higher and higher. The idealization of humanity may be taken in the sense of the 'religion of evolution'".

B. Beg your pardon. Now you have intorduced a big word, evolution. But is it not will-O- the- Wisp?"

A. "How?"

B. " Well, the conception of evolution has not remained always the same: and at the present moment there is a wide-spread tendency to revolt. from the purely mechanistic idea and to adopt. ideas of a *vitalist* and *emergent* kind. The older conception of the *orthodox* evolutionists, that the process of evolution can be regarded as, in the last resort, explicable by the laws of mechanics, has now been seriously shaken, and the *vitalist* and *emergent* theories have gained adherents both in scientific and philosophical circles. According to the former view, the evolutionary process is the development and

progressive expression of a *life force*: according to the latter view, the process of evolution is not explicable wholly by lows of matter and motion but has the property of giving rise to new forms of existence which could not have been predicted prior to their occurrence. The two theories are by no means identical."

A. " I admit your charge against the mechanistic theory of evolution.

'Obviously, so long as the process of evolution is regarded consistently as purely mechanical, there is little ground for finding an object of religious emotion in it, for few men would be willing to worship a machine, and probably even those few, like the man in Mr. Wells' story, the Lord of the Dynamo, only because they did not really think of it as a mere machine.'

But the two theories mentioned by you do furnish a basis for a new religion.

'Under any kind of teleological view of evolution it is possible to conceive religion as the service of those ideal tendencies which can be discerned within the process, as co-operation with the Life Force, or as the reaching forward, in aspiration, to that better life which is to be created by the process. A view of religion of this type has influ-

enced much contemporary literature and is implied in may of the writings of Mr. G.B. Shaw and Mr. H.G. Wells'".

B. "I know all that. I admit that there is some force in what you say, but only some. The religious consciousness of the type just spoken of 'affirms the truth of the intuition that we are able to cooperate with an immanent purpose in the world, and that our good and happiness will be found in so doing.' But there are serious shortcomings which we cannot afford to ignore.

'Since the evolutionary creed rules out the conception of a Deity who is above the process, it can give no countenance to the belief that the law of righteousness is founded in eternal Reality: if all is in flux and evolution, the very standards of judgment themselves must be involved in the stream of ceaseless change. Nor again can the religion of evolution allow the belief that there is an ultimate good towards which the efforts of finite beings to attain any good are tending. There can be no final vision of God in which the soul may know itself to be no longer in via but at last in patria, no longer on its pilgrimage, but at last in its mother land. Nor again, can this type of religion justify any sense of dependence upon a Being infinitely greater than ourselves. The only dependence which it can recognize is a dependence upon the evolutionary process which, according to this hypotheiss, is unconscieous and therefore below the level of our own being."[1]

I much doubt if such a religion will satisfy the human craving for worship."

A. "Yes, I do realize the force of what you say. Now it seems to me very clear. But by the by will you allow me to talk of one or two more hypotheses which we find so much in the air? They are not the creation of my brain."

B. " Most gladly."

A. "Have you heard of Prof. Alexander's suggestion?"

B."What is that?"

A. " He proposes that we should attach the word 'deity' to that higher type of being which, so to say, is waiting to be evolved, that with which the evolutionary process is now in travail. When the next stage is reached, "deity' will once more be transferred into the future, and worship will be directed towards the still higher yet to come."

B. "Ha" Ha" Ha" So he proposes to worship the deity which is both *non existent and unknown.*

'It is non-existent because, by definition directly it begins to exist, it ceases to be deity, and it is unknown, because according to Alexander, we have no idea what the next step in evolution will

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1 Ibid. pp. 65-67

be like. It is perhaps not surprising that, so far as it is known, few temples have been erected for the worship of the God who never is but always will be.""

The Vedas enjoin us to worship the real, living and ever-existing God.

Ma Chidanyat Visansata

"Do not worship another being."

Indramit stota

"Worship God alone."[1]

When you worship God, He is with you, He knows that you are worshipping. You feel His existence. He responds to the feeling. Such a feeling is absent elsewhere, and if you imagine it is there, it is only self-delusion. "We cannot be-lieve a thing simply because we wish it. We cannot worship what we know to be a mental fiction."[1]

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1 मा चिदन्यद् विशंसत। इंद्रमित् स्तोत। (Rg Veda VIII-i-I)

CHAPTER VII
DEMI-GODS, SAINTS AND HEROES

The upshot of the dialogue given in the foregoing chapter is that the purpose of worship can be the best served only if the object of worship is that infinite, perfect, all-intelligent and all-powerful Existence which we generally call God and which in the Vedicliterature is known as *Brahman,* and that Humanity either actual or idealized can be the object of service alone and not of worship.

But there are other rivals too in the field. Even those who, like Comte, do not believe in the existence of such a God have to recognize the existence of strong religious impulses in human nature and in order to satisfy those impulses, they advise or at least allow "the use of the images and examples of particular individuals." On this point they come closer to a host of theists. also. We find that those who claim the attention of the worshipper besides God are:-

(1) God and goddesses.

(2) Demi-gods.

(3) Saints.

(4) Heroes.

Buddism and jainism do not believe in God,

the Maker. But they worship saints on the ground that they have "contributed to progress or exemplified in a striking manner ideal human qualities." The Hindu Mythology, like Greek, Roman or other mythologies, abounds in Gods and Goddesses, a sort of mysterious beings whose nature has never been clearly understood. What are these gods and goddesses? In what relation do they stand with Brahman or God and how far do they meddle with the forces of the universe of which God is the supreme controller? What is their place between souls and God? These questions have perhaps never worried the worshippers. The puranas are full of stories about these gods, their births, their marriages, their affections, their quarrels, their wars, their treaties and many other things excepting, of course one thing, that is death. We men are mortals. But the gods are immortals In what way do they differ from human beings in their relation with matter is also a serious question. Do they have bodies, whether astral or gross? If they have, how do those bodies differ from ours? If they have not, what do marriages, such as that of Siva and Parvati, or births like those of Ganesa and Svami Kartikeya Means? Ganesa is a born god and yet immortal. His mother goddess Parvati is said to have undergone a series of rebirths and yet she is not a moral. People worship

these gods and goddesses and think that they are worshipping the one God. Vagueness is the plank on which the whole action of worship stands and people are afraid that its analysis will give an unbearable shock to the whole fabric. Several ingenuities have been thought of in order to save people from scepticism. Some hold that these gods and goddesses are nothing else than the particles of the Almighty. Others conscious of the absurdity of positing parts of an indivisible whole, aver that the gods and goddesses are merely different *aspects* of the same deity. But the word 'aspects' does not clear the matter. What is the exact idea of aspects? And how does the explanation reconcile with the legendary accounts given in the Puranas? If gods and goddesses are identical with forces of nature the theory loses the weight of personality. In short the whole theory is enwrapped in mystery.

Then there are demi- gods. They were originally men. Either they saved the country from some terrible foe or they did some super-normally brave deed and therefore they were deified. There are stories which say that these persons became gods and goddesses and they live in different unknown and unknowable regions. Whether they are gods or ordinary souls or any intermediate species nobody knows,

whether they are open to the cycle of rebirths or have got eternal bliss, nobody cares to know. But they claim worship and vehemently too. The temples of the world are full of their images. I think they have a sort of monopoly. People remember them when they forget God. The poor pray them for riches, the sick request them for healing, as if either God has abdicated His throne in their favour or delegated all important functions to them.

Close to their heels follow saints and heroes, the persons who rendered a valuable service to the country and though they were not deified, at least they won a prominent place in the heart of people. They have no separate temples dedicated to them, but their images are found in all temples as subsidiaries. Where there is an image of Viragin Mary and Child Jesus, there are the images of saints and martyrs also. Temples dedicated to Rama have images of Hanumana too. In Siva's temples, even His bull receives some attention of the worshippers. I have seen the pictures of Sivaji being actually worshipped in some maratha homes. Once when I introduced God's prayer in a school, certain friends came with a suggestion, "Why not sing praises of Sivaji. He is more known in these parts." When I said, "Sivaji is a hero, God is God, praise the hero and pray your God" I doubt whether my point was clear to them.

The confusion between all these objects of worship is so very common in the minds of people that they have practically renounced the worship of God and the worship of subordinate deities, demigods or saints hastakenan absolutse possession of man's religiosity. A Hindu would only think of Rama and Krisna when he has to worship God. He believes that Rama and Krishna not only *were* God's incarnations in the times when they lived and worked on the earth, but *are still god* and their images are the images of God Himself. At the time of trouble, he invokes their help as if they are hearing him from somewhere.

Comte would advise the use of images. According to him, this satisfies man's religious impulses. He thinks that there is more reality in the worhsip of saints and heroes, than in that of God, who is only the creature of a diseased brain. At least it keeps fresh in our mind the memory of our past benefactors and gives encouragement to the living generation. We must show our gratitude to our saviours whether political or otherwise.

This is right, but only partially,. The confusion is fatally misleading. The *commemoration* of our heroes, saviours and saints, is one thing and wor-

ship of our Maker quite a different thing. Nelson's statue in the Trafalgar Square and occasional meetings held in his memory or honour are no part of an Englishman's worship. They fill his heart with feelings of partiotism, but they are no substitute for his church services. Nelson was a man when he fought and died for his country. He was no God or demigod. Even now he is held as a worthy ancestor, but no god. To remember an ancestor or receive inspiration from his example is one thing and to believe that he has become a god and shares in the governance of the universe quite another. They create two mentalities which are quite different and divergent.

Some persons defends this confusion on philosophical grounds. They say that after all, all life is a part of the Great life, all souls, mere sparks of the Great Fund of Fire called God, or reflections of the rays of the Great Sun. It is difficult to discuss these philosophies here. I would refer the reader to my book "I and My God". But suffice to say that these analogies are highly misleading and have been too often exploited for the propagation of pet theories. If all life is held as a part of the great life, if He is We and We are He, then there is no question of worship, the worshipped and the worshipper. But it is easier said than felt or realized. The identity or even one-

ness of the worshipper and the worshipped has long been the theme of many prominent philosophies and has often kept thinkers bewitched and spell-bound, but it hav never been able to effect the practical religion and even the most prominent philosophers have been compelled to think out ingenious arguments in order ot bring about seeming consistency, much less harmony, between the thoughts and the deed.

The religious side of humanity has indeed suffered a terrible loss by this confusion. All saints and heroes have begun their lives with humbleness and trust in God. They have kept this trait intact throughout their lives. And at least this much can be safely said that a *majority of them,* were true to this principle even upto the end. Rama who is worshipped as God throughout the whole Hindudom never claimed

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1 References to Rama's performing worship or sandhya:-

(1) कौसल्या सुप्रजाराम पूर्वा सन्ध्या प्रवर्तते।
उत्तिष्ठ नर शार्दूल कर्तव्यं दैवमाह्निकम्।। (बालकाण्ड)

(2) ततस्तु तमसातीरं रम्यमाश्रित्य राघवः।
उपास्य स शिवां सन्ध्यां विषयान्तं व्यगाहत।। (अयोध्याकाण्ड)

(3) एवं विलपतस्य भास्करोऽस्तमुपागमत्।
आश्वासितो लक्ष्मणेन रामः सन्ध्यामुवाविशत्। (युद्धकाण्ड)

God-head for himself. At every step we find him most devoutly offering his prayers to the Almighty.1 There are a few exceptions which after reaching great heights of glory got puffed up with pride and claimed either full divinity or a share in divinity, mostly to create confidence among the adherents. But by doing so, they marred their own original cause. If you want your followers to adhere to your person blindfoldedly, the most tempting way is to profess that either you are God himself,. or God-sent agent or representative on the Earth, or at least having direct communion with Him. But this superstition, though temporarity useful proves highly mischievous in the end. The famous oracles of Deplphi rendered a great service to the then political problems but they also strengthened the chains of slavish mentality. The most professed and perhaps universally acknowledged aim of religion is emancipation-emancipation from all physical, mental and spiritual bondage. But if you just study the religious history of mankind, you will find that slavery reigns supreme. Most religious places are so dark that you cannot enter there without a candle even at noon. When the whole outside world enjoys brights sunshine, these dens of worship are dangerously dark. It is true not only physically but intellectually too. In order to make religion mystic

and mysterious, its custodians have tried to put the lamp of truth under a bushel. They are so afraid of the open-eyed ness of the followers that they do not let they rays of truth pass freely. Even plain truths are put in an enigmatic language with the object that they may go half- understood and any interpretations might be put upon them at the time of need.

We admit that heroism of our heroes and saintliness of our saints are very very inspiring. But as soon an conmemoration dwindles into worship, inspiration merges into superstition and the disease once produced cannot be easily cured. The admirers and supporters of man-worship have too often ignored this aspect of the question. A teacher is a teacher when you receive lessons from him. Of course you should respect and rever him and have faith in him. But all your respect, all your reverence and all your faith point to that one end, I mean, the reception of the lessons. The lessons are the chief thing. All else is subsidiary. But when this reverence takes the form of bowing down before the image of the teacher, or reciting his name a hundred times every day, or holding him as a mediator or redeemer, the centre of gravity is lost and the aim which Comte or others had in view cannot be achieved. We move from truth to untruth so unconsciously, so slowly and so impercepti-

bly, that we open our eyes only when it is too late and that also very seldom.

Man- worship is the most dangerous of all worships. It begins with our love for the principles for which the man stands. The beginning is all right. Then grows love for his personality. Quite natural. This too has its own advantages. Then reverence for his name or memory. This requires caution. Here is the likelihood of your going astray. A little carelessness on your part will carry you remoter and remoter from your original position. If an idea enters your mind, as it has so often entered the minds of people at large, that the reverence is for the person, rather than for his teachings, you shift the ground and begin to traverse the most deceptive and the most dangerous regions. Perhaps you don't realize that you have left the principles you so loved far behind and even the personality which was so closely associated with those principles has slipped out of your hands and now you are running after shadows. Jesus Christ is a very illuminating example. The principles for which he lived or died are the most laudable. But where is the connection between those principles and the super-normal way in which he was born or his resurrection and mediation? But what are the cardinal points of Christianity? The birth of the Son of God

from Virgin Mary and His resurrection on the third day of His death. A Hindu who bows down before the representations of Rama in the Ramalila does not realize that it is futile to cherish Rama's memory without living the life which Rama valued and loved. He has a vague mysterious belief that in bowing down before Rama the actor, he is worshipping his Maker, who, when pleased, would confer emancipation upon him.

Man-worship has one more dangerous aspect. All men are after all imperfect beings. They have their good points no doubt; but their imperfections also. At the time when they are teaching their principles, they want wheir disciples to look to their good points only and not to their shortcomings. The Vedic Rsi would say to his disciple.

Yanyanavadyani karmani,
Tani Sevitavyani,
No itarani.[1]

"Only accept that part of our teachings and conduct which is right, nothing else". But this safeguard is generally lost sight of. Sometimes the teacher claims perfection or divinity with the good intention

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1 यान्यनवद्यानि कर्माणि तानि सेवितव्यानि नो इतराणि।

of winning absolute adherence to his principles. But at times this is done for concealing or justifying his weaknesses. Cases are not wanting when teachers have cast snares to serve their selfish ends. Just as astrologers have recourse to ingenious interpretations to maintain their hold upon their followers, so have prophets and preachers.It is natural fro a man to conceal his weakness, especially moral. And this desire to do so becomes much keener when he becomes the religious leader of a group or society. In many cases moral weaknesses have descended to the followers. simply because those weaknesses belonged to the prophets, and therefore, come to be looked upon as virtues. A teacher, as long as he is only a teachers, helps you in seeking the right path of life, but as soon as he becomes a redeemer, or a prophet, or a divine mediator, he becomes dangerous, You begin to look upon him as the saviour from sins. He does not show you the path, *be atones for you*. Thus it is that you are lost. If a teacher teaches you arithmetic, he teaches you how to calculate. He does not give you money, he cannot make you rich unless you work upon those principles. Similary a religious teacher can teach you how to live a virtuous life. He will not live that life for you, nor will he save you from the consequences of a wicked life. His example may

keep you up at the times of difficulty, but if you think that the worship of his image or recital of his name can secure a living response from the teacher, you will be deluding your self.

There is one more weakness to which most prominent persons have fallen victim, though unintentionally. Greatness is a thing not as difficult to attain as to sustain. Many truly great personages have been terribly pressed down under the burden, and their imperceptible fall has proved too unfortunate for their followers. It often happens that after having creditably marshalled his followers to distinct successes, the leader begins to think that whatever he does, is done under a direct inspiration from God. up till now he and his followers used to examine well every step he took or recommended. The successes achieved so far through considerateness and well-balanced judgment now subtly changed his psychology and he begins to pose as a mere messenger of God. He thinks that whatever urge he feels within himself is not his, but God's and neigher he nor his followers have a right to examine it. This makes the leader vain and his followers sheepishly credulous. The result is a terrible blow to his cause. Such weaknesses are found in the lives of most prophets, religious as well as political, and their names or their images come to

be worshipped at the expense of the great cause for which they began to fight at the beginning of their lives. What a terrible fall it is! and how imperceptible! we are being dragged down to a dark abyss though we feel that we are going up. This has been the fate of may reforms, many creeds and many religiouns This is a very dangerous side of man-worship and needs guarding against.

Therefore it has been enjoined that God alone is worthy of worship and none else.

CHAPTER VIII
THE DEVAS

The sanskrit word 'Deva" (देव) is so popular and so misleading that it deserves special consideration. The most prevalent idea is that the Vedas teach polytheism or worship of many gods and goddesses. There is not the least doubt that the present Hindu is a polytheist. He claims this title and is proud of it. His temples are the temples of so many gods and goddesses. His puranas are full of the stories about these gods. The whole Hinduism of today seems to be based upon polytheism. But it is a serious question whether the Hindu was originally a polytheist. Christinity and Islam which claim to be the originators of the idea of monotheism are never tired of attributing polytheism to Hinduism. This pays them. But this is not the truth.

The study which the orientalists have made of the Vedas or anchiet Hindu scriptures has brought clearly to light the fact that monotheism was not unknown in the times of the Vedas and that the word 'deva' which is supposed to be equivalent of 'God' was used in several other senses also. Maxmuller in his

'Origin and Growth of Religion' says that "*Deva*"came to mean 'God' because it originally meant 'Bright"[1]. The Sanskrit root 'Divu' (दिवु) of which 'Deva' is a derivative has an extensive range of meanings. The Dhatu patha gives as many as ten e.g.,

(1) क्रीड़ा	Sport. (2) विजिगीषा	Desire for Victory.	
(3) व्यवहार	Action. (4) द्युति	Shining.	
(5)स्तुतिः	Prayer. (6) मोदः	Pleasure.	
(7) मदः	Intoxication. (8) स्वप्नः	Sleep	
(9) कान्तिः	Beauty. (10)गतिः	Motion.	

Thus following Sanskrit grammatical rules, one has to admit that any object is *'Deva*' to which any or all of the above meanings can be applicable. All orientalists are unanimous on the point that the Vedic Sanskrit words were extremely fluid in the beginning and long time must have passed before they could be solidified into their fixed applications by usage and tradition. The greatest difficulty in making a true estimate of the Vedic words is the extensive, to some, even incredible, length of period which the Hindu literature covers and the changes which such a long period naturally entails, without being

1 *Maxmuller's 'Origin and Growth of Religion's, p.6.*

easily detected. In the case of those literatures which are only a few centuries old, it is easier to detect the changes which the words have undergone; but sanskrit literature has so many complicated strata that to put our finger cleary at a particular spot is well nigh impossible.[1] Still, close comparison of the Vedas and the subscequent Hindu literature, That is available has become very helpful.

There are numerous examples in which words have undergone an astonishing metamorphosis. But the most unfortunate is the word "*Deva*" because it has created so much misapprehension and wherever the word '*Deva*' occurs popular mind takes it to be

1 *It was a real misfortune to Sanskrit scholarship that our first acquaintance with Indian Literature should have begun with the prettinesses of kalidas and Bhavabhuti. The only original, the only important period of Sanskrit Literature, which deserves to become the subject of earnest study far more than it is at present is that period which preceded the rise of Buddhism, when Sanskrit was still the spoken language of India, and the worship of Siva was still unknown.*

(Maxmuller's Lectures- 'On Origin and Groth of Religion', P. 149).

the equivalent of 'God'. Swami Dayanand gives so many meanings of the word "Deva".

अत्र परिगणनं गायत्र्यादिच्छन्दोन्विता मंत्रा, ईश्वराज्ञा, यज्ञः, यज्ञाङ्गं, प्रजापतिः, परमेश्वरः, नराः, कामः, विद्वान्, अतिथिः माता, पिता आचार्यश्चेति कर्मकाण्डादीनि प्रत्येता देवताः सन्ति। (ऋग्वेदादिभाष्यभूमिका, वेदविषयविचारः)

(1) The vedic mantras together with the metres Gayatri etc. (2) Injunctions of God. (3) Yajna or Sacrifice. (4) Any part of a sacrifice. (5) Sovereign. (6) God. (7) Men.(8) Desire. (9)A learned man. (10) A guest. (11) Mother. (12) Father. (13) Preceptor.

Yaska, The ancient Vedic Lexicographer explains the word ' Deva' as follows:-

देवो दानाद् वा, दीपनाद् वा, द्योतनाद् वा, द्युस्थानो भवतीति वा।
(निरुक्त अ. 7 खं. 15)

'*Deva*' is one that gives, or shines, or expresses or is an abode of something shining. Thus anybody who gives anything in charity is a Deva Kings are addressed as 'Deva'. So are learned men. Shining objects such as a lamp or a star are devas. A vedic Verse is a Deva because it expresses thoughts. God is '*Deva*' becuase He is the support of all effulgent objects. In the following verse of Yajurveda, *Deva* means *five senses*.

नैनद् देवा आप्नुवन् (यजुर्वेद 40/4)

"Senses cannot approach Him", *i.e.*, God is beyond the range of our five senses.

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1 *"The Vedic religion where not only the special gods ruling the different departments of nature (e.g., Dyaus, sky, Agni, fire, Surya, sun, Vata, Wind etc.) and even the distinguishble . aspects and functions of the same divinity were separately worshipped (e.g., Surya, Mitra, Savita, Pusan, Visnu, Vivasvat, All repressenting different functions of the sun), but abstract goddesses (like Sraddha, faith, Anumati, favour, Aramati, Devotion, Nirrti, decease) were also invoked in worship and even the fee paid to the priest (Daksina) was deified. A powerful source of multiplication of gods is sacred association in Vedic religion. Things needs in rituals were themselves invoked as gods (Gravana, press-stone, Apas, water, Ghrta, Clarified butter, Barhisi sacrificial litter, Yupa, sacrificial post, etc.), and even the implements of agriculture and war received similar divine honours (e.g., Plough, Arrow, Car, etc.)" Hari Das Bhattacharya's "The Foundation of Living faiths", pp 155-156. The very wide range of the 'devas' quoted here is a sufficient ground for questioning the propriety of translating 'deva' as god and 'devi' as goddess and calling Vedic people polytheists (Author).*

When the word "*Deva*" conveys so many senses it is unjust to conclude that as the Vedas mention the word '*Deva*' is plural they teach plurality of gods or polytheism.[1] It is really difficult to find a most appropriate English synonym of the Sanskrit word 'Deva' because there is no such word as might give so many meanings. Certain orientalists have used the term 'Shining Ones' (*e.g*., Dr. Besant's Translation of the Gita). But that too is not very safe. When the sun, the world, the lightning, have been spoken of as '*Devas*', people think that the old Aryans were worshippers of these physical objects, while the fact is that there is no mention of worship at these places. To say that the sun, the moon or a lamp is a shining object is one thing, and to say that it should be worshipped quite another.

Some persons think that the *devas* are some invisible beings that preside over forces of nature, for instance a river is a gross physical object, but there is a river-god that presides over all rivers, there is a fire-god, a mountain god, a forest god, so on and so forth. What the exact nature of there presiding deities is nobody cares to ascertain definitely. There is a vague notion that there are *devas* or lesser divinities presiding over hills and dales and other objects. Are they intelligent beings like souls? They must be.

At least they cannot be inanimate. Are they all-knowing, and all powerful like God? They cannot be, otherwise there will be myriads of all-knowing and all-powerful gods and the line of demarcation between God and gods would vanish. Are they infinite like God? The same difficulty. After they created by God? How do they govern? For instance *Varuna* the water-god is alleged to be presiding over all sorts of waters. Is this water-god the same as God the governor of the whole universe? Or different? Or simply a separate name for the same God as viewed partially? To be clearer, Take an example. There is the Viceroy and Governor General of India who rules over the whole country. He is the Viceroy and he is the Governor-General at the same time. Then there is a Commander-in Chief who governs a particular department called 'military'. This commander-in chief is a quite different being. He governs a department and not all departments. Similary should we think that the presiding deities are the presiding governors of separate departments, while God Himself the Governor of all the departments taken together? If you agree to this analogy, you may possibly feel relieved at the outset, but later on there will be insurmountable difficulties. Not only is it a great blow to monotheism but to all theism, of whatever type or denomination.

The very idea of theism carries with it the idea of oneness of the universe and the oneness of the Governor. But on the other hand, if you say that these presiding deities are not separate deities, but the same god, viewed partially, you can say so only if you do not lose sight of the fact that you are using figurative language. The difficulty is that the figurative nature of the language is very soon lost sight of and we begin to behave as if we are using actual, unadorned, unfigurative language. Those who believe in the presiding deities behave as if they do not use figurative language and as if these deities are quite separate and distinct beings. Take the case of my body. I am its governor. But 'Governing' Means different functions. When I see, I am the seer; when I hear, I am the hearer; when I eat, I am the eater; when I drink, I am the drinker. But it does not mean that the different departments of seeing, hearing, eating or drinking have got different distinct heads eating or drinking have got different distinct heads or governors and I, above them all. If these were eye-soul, ear-soul nose-soul, bone-soul, bold-soul, hair-soul, nerve-soul, breath-soul, you can understand how nonsensical the situation would have been. If you so wish, you can use figurative language and say that your eye quarrelled with your ear, or hands with your stomach; but to be

able to think clearly you will have to be shorn of all figures of speech, otherwise you will find yourself in a hopeless muddle.

Then the question is what about so many devas mentioned in the Vedas? Well, one thing is clear. The Vedas do not mention presiding deities or lower deities in the sense of their separate and distinct existence. At places the word "*deva*" does not convey any idea of 'divinity'. It simply means an object, a shining object perhaps. The *Satapatha* Brahmana[1] says:-

(1) य एष तपति।

It is that yonder sun that shines etc. (II-ii4-6)

(2) अयं वै वायुर्योऽयं पवते।

It is this wind that blows. (I-i-4-24)

(3) अयं वै लोको बर्हिरोषधयो बर्हिः।

Barhi is this world or Barhi means herbs. (I-Viii-2-II)

(4) विशो विश्वे देवाः।

Common people are *Visve-Devah* (II-iv-3-6)

(5) वाग्वै सरस्वती।

Sarasvati is speech. (II-v-5-6)

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1 No doubt the figurative description of rituals provides a germ for later polytheism especially Pauranic but that stage does not seem to have arrived in the time of the satapatha.

(6)भूमिर्हीयमदितिरसीतीयं वाऽ.अदिदिरियथ्ठंहीदथ्ठंसर्व ददते।
This earth is *Aditi*, because it gives everything. (VII-iv-2-7)

The masculine form '*Deva*' and its corresponding femining 'devi' are even now equivalent to learned men and learned women (ladies and gentlemen). It appears that what pass as mysterious gods and goddesses were originally different classes of learned men and learned women. For example, if you speak of *'Gandharvas*', a Sanskrit Pandita would tell you that-*'Gandharvas'* are some mysterious beings akin to gods. Sanskrit literature is full of such references, especially later poems (cf. Kiratarjuniyam). But mahidhara, the famous commentator of Yajurveda, commenting yupon verse 9 of Chapter XXXII says.

गां वेदावाचं धारयति विचारयतीति गन्धर्वः वेदान्तवेत्ता।

"The sanskrit word 'go' means speech or vedic speech. One that supports (धारयति) or contemplates the Vedas is Gandharva or a man well-versed in the Vedanta".

The fluidity of words mentioned above is responsible for one more confusion. There are certain words which are significant of worldly objects as well as of God. For example, the term father, which means

our earthly 'begetter' is equally used for God. Similarly God has been named in the Vedas and elsewhere as *'Mata'* (mother), *bandhu* (brother). Nobody thinks that *'pita'*, *'mata'*, or '*bandhu'* are names of different gods. But if *Chandrama*' (literally-delight giver from the root '*chadi*' चदि आह्लादे।) is used for God because he is delight giver, then somehow people thingk that the reference is to the moon whom the ancients worshipped as God. The Vedas themselves, have cleared this position in unequivocal terms. The Rgveda says:-

एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति।

"God is one, the learned call Him by many names". This means that the Vedas inculate one-ness of God and many-ness of His names. Plu-rality of names is no contradiction to monotheism. On this point there is no dispute anywhere. In order to express different aspects of God's nature and His connection with us, it is very essential to use different names, names which have a common significance with other objects. As long as they are taken in the dervative sense, there is no confusion whatsoever. The confusion arises only when the terms begin to be used in especially 'set' and settled sense. A very clear example of this degeneration is pro-

vided by a verse in the Bhagvad-Gita. In the Yajurveda God has been spoken of as Agni, Vayu, Aditya, Chandrama and sukra.

तदेवाग्निस्तदादित्यस्तद्वायुस्तदु चन्द्रमाः।

तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म ता आपः स प्रजापतिः।।

(Yajurveda -32-1)

This verse can be translated in two ways. If you take the words in their derivative sense it would mean:

God is *Agni*, e.g., the great mover, *Aditya*, i.e., breath of the world, *Vayu*, the giver of life, *Chandrama*, delight- giver, *Sukra*, a great potentiality, *Brahma*, the great principle, *Prajapati*, Or Lord of the creation.

But if you take the words in their solidified sense it would mean:-

"God is fire, wind, sun, moon and Sukra, Brahma and Prajapati".

This is polytheism. Originally the word Chandrama (delight-giver) was used for God as well as for the 'moon', as both give delight. But the literal meaning of the word Chandrama is not the same as that of 'moon' though both these words may signify the same luminary. In the following verse of Bhagvad-

Gita.

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च।

God is called Vayu, Yama and Sasanka. 'Sasanka' in later sanskrit comes for the moon because masses think that the moon has in its lap a hare (Sasa means here, '*Anka*' अंक means lap.) This is a very deplorable degeneration of the Vedic idea, as the Vedic word 'Chandrama' has the derivative sense of delight- Giver, while its so-called synonym, 'Sasanka' has no such sense. The veda mantra has a sense, a beautiful sense, while the Gita verse is ludicrously nonsensical. Be it remembered that 'Sesanka' is not found in the Vedas. The Vedic Mantra is monotheistic while the Gita verse is polytheistic. This fall from the high pedestal of monotheism, to polytheistic jumble, due to the entry of vulgar element is highly deplorable. swami Dayanand in his satyarpha Prakasa and Rgvedadi bhasya Bhumika has appealed to the Pandits to save the Vedas and Vadic words from such ignominy and protect them from inner as well as outer attacts.[1]

One very pernicious effect which the polytheistic mentrality of the Hindus has shed over the national life of India is the disintegration of the Hindu society into many hostile camps. Even when esoteri-

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1 Vide Pandit Guru datta's 'Terminology of the Vedas'.

cally montheistic, as some claim-

"The smae god differently named would bring different sects into being-Narayana, Visnu, Rama, Hari and Krisna, though referring to the same god, have different sets of followers in India with a fairly hostile attitude towards the votaries of the same god with a different name and among the spanish peasants, we are told, it is perfectly legitimate to worship Virgin Mary with one title and belonging to a particular village while reviling in unseemly language the Madonna of another village and bearing a different title.[1]

Let alone ordinary people, even great Tulsidasa is said to have refused to bow down to the image of Sri Krishna, till, as the tradition says, the image assumed the shape of Rama and took bow and arrow in its hands.

If the word '*Deva*' had been rightly understood and the vedic spirit kept up, such a mishap would not have happened.

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1 Haridas Bhattacharya's "The Foundation of Living Faith", P. 18.

CHAPTER IX
IDOLATRY

Allied to the question of '*Devas*' is the problem of idolatry which is perhaps the commonest form of worship in the world. Oridinarily "an idol is an object which man sets up to worship, instead of God"[1] In this sense perhaps many people escape the charge of being idolaters. But if we scrutinize closely the ways of the worshippers we find that many who claim to be the professed denouncers of idol-worship indulge in this. Fetish worship, astrolatry (star-worship), zoolatry (*e.g.*, snake-worship), tree-worship are obviously different forms of idolatry. But man-worship, saint-worship and angel-worship also come under the same category.

"Whaterver idolatry many become through its brautalizing influence on personal, family, and national life, in its essence it is not a turning away from God to worship stock or stone in his room, but rather a desire to get hold of something, Which seems to give promise of the divine blessing without any spiritual contact between the soul of the worshipper and God."[2]

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1 Idolatries: Old and New by James Baldwin Brown, P.8.

Speaking of ritualistic form of Christian worship James Baldwin Brown rightly observes:

"What God is behind your cloth of gold, your violet velvet, your succession of colours, your smoke of incense, your sacred water, your diluted wine, your muttered prayers and your Latin hymns? And is it not certain that such a God as you are seeking, with all the elaborate apparatus of propitiation with which a slave would approach an Eastern despot will become in the end but the shadow of a shade to your living spirit, and leave you, at last, nothing but tunics and platters to worship in His room? The main question is never about particular forms -Their beauty or absurdity. The vital question concerns the spirit which is behind these forms." ***1***

Some persons resent the appellation of 'idolaters'. They say that they do not worship stones or images, but some Invisible Being wich is behind these objects: not the idols but the great while to examine the question rather analytically.

Images are of two kinds, either of (I) some saint, prophet, teacher or incarnation of God in the from of statues or pictures; or (2) idols used as sym-

....

2Ibid, p. 19.

bols signifying some abstract attribute of the deity. When set-up in a temple or abode of worship, they are regarded as having obtained some mysterious divinity which was absent before their consecration. Consecration is a ceremony consisting of a set of rituals, simple or complicated, accompanied by the chanting of certain hymns or formulas. The images found in different temples of India or other countries are mostly the representations of historical or mythological personages supposed to be the incarnated forms or some gods or goddesses. These idols refer back to some story given in the books on mythology. Saints, devotees and prophets have also been sometimes promiscuously mixed up with these incarnations. For instance Rama and Krishna are the God Himself in the form of man. Christ is the son of God coming into flesh. Mary is associated with Christ. She derives her divinity not directly but through her son, Jesus. Ganesa or Ganapati is a god, being the son of Mahadeva or Siva. The idol of Siva is generally his phallic representation and is conected with a story of the Siva purana.

Astrolatry consists of the worhsip of the sun, the noon and oter stars. This has also a mythological[1]

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1 Ibid, P. 21

explanation. The Hindu, the Roman, and the Greek mythologies describe how, when and where, some saints or important personages were converted into a shining star on account of the meritorious way of their living. Some persons believe that the sun and the moon are really living being or divinities which understand our prayers.

Zoolatry or worship of animals is either on account of their importance as objects of fear or utility or on account of some good done by an ancestor of the species in ancient times to some national or religious hero. Animals are also sacrificed.

In India there is a number of trees such *as pipal, Aonla and Bilva* which are worshipped in different forms.

Rivers such as the Ganges, mountains such as Gauri Sankara are supposed to be the bodies of some deity. They are worshipped directly as well as through respresentative images. For example, pilgrims go to the river and bow down. But if they cannot, they make an image of the goddess Ganges in the form of a woman and offer their homage to it.

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1 The Dhruva or Pole Star is said to be the Hindu child devotee Dhruva who is well known for his tenacity in devotion. The Vasistha and the Arundhati (two stars in ursa Major) are the famous priest of Rama and his wife.

By man-worship, we mean not the worhsip of images representing some personage or saints but the direct worship of man, such as the preceptor. In some sects, youngs damsels are worshipped as the representatives of some goddess. The worship consists in making the person to be worshipped seated in a particular posture and performing certain rituals similar to those done in the case of images. Tomb-Worship is prevalent not only among idolaters but also among iconoclastic Christians and Mahomedans. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales give a vivid description of the worship of St. thomas Becket's Tomb. The tomb of the prophet of Islam and the tombs of Husain and his allies attract a large number of Moslems. In India you will find many devout moslems. bowing to the tombs in a graveyard or reciting holy texts on them, as if they contain living and responsive beings instead of the lifeless dead. Most tombs of the Moslem saints (e.g., at Amroha, Jalesar and Bahraich) are worshipped by the Hindus and offerings taken by the Moslem Pirs. There is hardly any village in India where Moslem tombs are not worshipped with the same faith as other idols. In southern India where catholic christians abound, there is hardly any difference between the forms of worship in a Christian Church and those of a Hindu Deval.

CHAPTER X
GREAT MEN ON IDOLATRY

Yet there is hardly any religious reformer of any age or any country who has not raised his finger against idolatry. It is just like a weed which grows in every garden, but which every gardener tries to up-root, as it thwarts the healthy growth of legitimate plants. Here we give a few quotations from Scrip-tures and other writings:-

(1)

"Of him, there is no image, whose glory is indeed great. "[1] (Yajur Veda 32/3)

(2)

"He is not to be grasped either from above or across or in the middle. Of Him there is no im-age, whose glory is indeed great."[2]

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1 न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति यस्य नाम महद् यशः।

2 नैनमूर्ध्वं न तिर्यञ्च न मध्ये परिजग्रभत्।

न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति यस्य नाम महद् यशः।।

(श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत् 4-19)

(Svetasvatara Upanisat)

In the second chapter of the first part of the Visnu purana, it is said:- "God is without figure, epi-thet, definition, or description. He is without defect, not liable to annihilation, change, pain or birth; we can only say, that he, who is the eternal being, is God, the vulgar look for their gods in water; men of more extended knowledge in celestial bodies; the ignorant in wood, bricks, and stories; but- learned men in the universal soul."[1]

(4)

2 In the 84th chapter of the tenth division of the sri Bhagavat, Krishna says to Vyasa and others:- "It is im-possible for those who consider pilgrimage as devo-

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1 Raja Ram Mohan Roya's Works, P. 68,

एको व्यापी समः शुद्धो निर्गुणः प्रकृतेः परः।

जन्मवृद्ध्यादिरहित आत्मा सर्वगतोऽव्ययः।।

(विष्णु पुराण 2/14/29)

2 Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Works, P. 68.

यस्यात्मबुद्धिः कुणपे त्रिधातुके स्वाधीः कलत्रादिषु भौम इज्यधीः।

यत्तीर्थबुद्धि सलिले न कर्हिचिज्जनेष्वभिज्ञेषु स एव गोखरः।। (भागवत पुराण 10/84/13)

tion, and believe that the divine nature exists in the image, to look upto, communicate with, to petition, and to revere true believers in God. He who views as the soul this body formed of phlegm, wind and bile, or regards only wife, children, and relations as himself (that is, he who neglects to contemplate the nature of the soul, he who attributes a divine nature to earthen images, and believes in the holiness of water, yet pays not such respect to those who are endowed with a knowledge of God, is as an ass amongst cows".

(5)

Many learned Brahmins are perfectly aware of the absurdity of idolatry, and are well informed of the nature of the purer mode of divine worship. But as in the rites, ceremonies, and festivals of idolatry, they find the source of their conforts and fortune, they not only never fail to protect idol worship from all attacks, but even advance and encourage it in the utmost of their power, by keeping the knowledge of their scripture concealed from the rest of the people. Their followers too, confiding in these leaders, feel gratification in the idea of the divine Nature residing in a being resembling themselves in Birth, shape, and propensities: and are naturally delighted with a mode of worship *agreeable* to the senses, though destructive of moral principles, and the fruitful parent of prejudice and superstition."[1]

(6)

"Locality of habitation and a mode of existence analogous to their own views of earthly things, are uniformly as cribed to each particular god. Thus the devotees of Siva, misconceiving the real spirit of the scriptures, not only place an implicit credence in the separate existence of siva, but even regards him as an omnipotent being, the greatest of all the divinities, who, as they say, inhabit the northern mountain of Kailasa: and that he is accompanied by two wives and several children, and surrounded with numerous attendants. In like manner the followers of Visnu, mistaking the allegorical representations of the sastras for relation of real facts, believe him to be chief over all other gods, and that he resides with his wife and attendants on the summit of heaven. Similar opinions are also held by the worshippers of Kali, in respect to that goddess. And in fact, the same observations are equally applicable to every class of Hindoo devotees in regard to their respective gods and goddesses.

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1 Raja Ram Mohan Roy in his "preface to the Translation of the Ishopanishat", works of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Vol. I, P. 70.

And so tenacious are those devotees in respect to the honour due to their chosen divinities, that when they meet in such holy places as Haridvara, Prayaga, Siva-Kanchi, or Visnu-Kanchi in the Dekhin, the adjustment of the point of precedence not only occasions the warments verbal altercations, but sometimes even blows and violence. Neither do they regard the images of those gods merely in the light of instruments for elevating the mind in the conception of those supposed beings: they are simply in themselves made objects of worship. For whatever Hindoo purchases an idol in the market, or constructs one with his own hands, or has one made under his own superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies called Prana Pratistha, or the endowment of animation, by which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life by super-natural powers. Shortly afterwards, if the idol be of the masculine gender, he marries it to a feminine one , with no less pomp and magnificence than he celebrates the nuptials of his own children. The mysterious process is now complete, and the God and goddess are esteemed the arbiters of his destiny, and continually receive his most ardent adoration.

At the same time the worshipper of images

ascribes to them at once the opposite natures of human and of super-human beings. In attention to their supposed wants as living beings he is see feeding, or pretending to feed them every morning and evening; and as in the hot season he is careful to favour them, so in the cold he is equally regardful of their comfort, covering them by day with warm clothing, and placing them at night in a snug bed. But superstition does not find a limit here: the acts and speeches of the idols, and their assumption of various shapes and colours, are gravely related by the Brahmins, and with all the marks of veneration are firmly believed by their deluded followers. Other practices they have with regard to those idols which decency forbids me to explain." (Ibid, pp. 71,72, 73.)

(7)

The fools look upon clayey, stony, metallic or wooden images as God and they never attain bliss.1

-Mahabharata.

(8)

Thou dost not see God in the house, though

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1 मृच्छिलाधातुदार्वादिमूर्तावीश्वरबुद्धयः।

क्लिश्यन्ति तपसा मूढाः परां शान्तिं न यांति ते।।

(महाभारत)

thou art hanging a stone in the neck.[1]

-Nanaka

(9)

The fool worships a stone; who can save him who is determined to be drowned.[2]

-Nanaka

(10)

One man bows his head before a stone, another hangs it in his neck, one bows towards the east and another towards the west, why does he worship these and why does he go to the stone; the whole world is mad; it can not know the secret of God.[3]

-Nanaka

(11)

Whoever looks upon a stone as God, wastes

1 घर में ठाकुर नज़र न आवे। गले में पाहन लटकावे।।
(नानक)

2 पाथर ले पूजे मुग्ध गवाँर। जो आप डूबे तुम कहाँ तारनहार।
(नानक)

3 काहू ने पाहन पूज धरयो सर काहू ने संग गले लटकायो।

काहू लख्यो प्राची दिशा में काहू पच्छिम को शीश नवायो।

क्यों इनको पूजत है और क्यों पाषाण को पूजन धायो।

क्रूर किया और जागो जग सारा, सिरी भगवान दा भेद न पाइयो।
(नानक)

his service.[1] - Kabira

(12)

The image was made by putting the foot on the stone, Had the image been real, it should have devoured the maker.[2] - Kabira

(13)

If stone- worship can lead to the attainment of God, I am ready to worship a mountain. A mill-stone is better than this idol as it enables the world to grind corn.[3]

-Kabira

(14)

You drink the water after washing the stone, you worship the stone as a living thing. You are engrossed in ignorance and you will become a stone in the end.[4] -Dadu

(15)

1. Have your village deities power to protect us by

1 जो पाथर को कहते देव- तिनकी निष्फल जावे सेव। (कबीर)

2 पाषाण गढ़के मूरति कीनी दीजे छाती पाँव।

जो अध मूरत साची है तो गढ़हारे को खाय।। (कबीर)

3 पाथर पूजे हर मिले तो हम पूजें पहाड;

या पाथर से चक्की भली जो पीस खाय संसार।। (कबीर)

4 पत्थर पीवे धोयके पत्थर पूजे प्रान।

अन्तकाल पत्थर भये भव डूबे अज्ञान।। (दादू)

killing the wicked?[1]

2. There is no deity except one God.

3. Leave it ! Leave it! It is a sin even to think of other gods and goddesses. It is immoral to remember other deities than one God.

4. God alone is worthy of our worship.

5. When the body itself is the temple, what is the need of other temples?

6. At one place, a vessel is a deity; at another place a tree is a deity; at another a lamp is a deity; The bow and the bow string is also a deity. Lo! the thing with which we measure is also a deity. Behold, my friends, my friends! These innumeral deities have left no place

....

1 (1)..........तुम्हारे गाँव के देवताओं में क्या दुष्टों की हत्या करके हमारी रक्षा करने की शक्ति है?

(2) एक ईश्वर के सिवा कोई दूसरा देवता नहीं है।

(3) छोड़ो! छोड़ो! अन्य देवी देवताओं का ख्याल करना भी पाप है। एक परमेश्वर के सिवा अन्य देवों का स्मरण करना व्यभिचार है।

(4) एक ईश्वर ही हमारा पूज्य है।

(5) जब शरीर ही मंदिर है तो दूसरे मंदिर की आवश्यकता क्या हैं?

for us to stand. Believe me, these is only deity and He alone is our God.

Basavesvara (A Lingayata Saint.)

(16)

The oldest Tamil Literature of which the Tamilians pride and is said to be of more than 5000 (five thousands) years old is the Tolkappian (तोलकप्पियम्) in which God is defined as Kandali(कण्डलि) Meaning one who is all Blissful.

One of the greatest of South Indian yogins by name sivavakkiar (शिवाक्कियर्) says:-

नट्ट कल्लै दैव मेन्रु नालु पुष्पम् सात्तिये

सुत्तिवन्दु मोनमोनेन्रु सोल्ल मन्त्रमेतडा।

नट्टकल्लम् पेशुमो नादनुल्लिरुक्कैयिल्

....

(6) कहीं कोई बरतन देवता है, कहीं कोई दरख्त देवता है, कहीं गली में पड़ा हुआ पत्थर देवता है। कहीं एक दिया देवता है। कमान और कमान की डोरी भी देवता है। देखो जिस चीज से नापा जाय वह भी देवता। मित्रो, देखो! इन बेशुमार देवताओं के कारण कहीं खड़े होने की जगह नहीं रही। मेरी बात पर विश्वास करो। देवता करो। देवता केवल एक ही है। और वही हमारा सबका परमेश्वर है। (बसवेश्वर)

सुट्टसट्टि सट्टुवम् करिच्चुवै यरियुमो।।

What is the meaning of going round and round an idol repeating and prattling some mantrams when the God is within? The pot in which we cook does not know the taste of the preparations we make. The idol which is installed by man (man-made) does not speak anything.

(There are similar quotations in plently condemning idolatry).

(तायुमानवर्) (Thayumanavar) was a great Tamil Poet and Saint who refers to God as follows:-

अंङिङगेनादपति नङ्कम् प्रकाशमाय् आनन्द पूर्तियाकि अरुलोडु निरैन्ततेतु।। -Meaning

That is God of which we cannot say in which particular place it exists, and which is all bliss and all happiness.

माणिक्कवाचकर् (Manickckavachakar) one of the foremost of the four S. Indian Tamil Acharyas defining God and condemning idol worship says:-

कल्लिलुम् शेमिबलुमो इरुधान एङ्ग लृकण्णुतले।

Can God which is as dear as the pupil of one's eye(कण्णुतल) Take his residence or abode in stones and metals?

(17)

1 What meaning is there in calling one that is all pervading, or offering seat to one that is the support of all? What sense is there in offering water for washing feet, hands or mouth to Him who is pure? what sense is there in offering scents or flower to one that needs no smelling? What sense is there in offering dress or ornaments to Him who has no body? What is the need of offering food to one that is ever satiated or betel leaf or one that is everywhere How can you bid farewell to one that is within all and without all!

Why offer incense to one that is formless, or lamp to one that sees all? To Him who is ever satis-

....

1 पूर्णस्यावाहनं कुत्र, सर्वाधारस्य चासनम्।
स्वच्छस्य पाद्यमर्घ्यं च, शुद्धस्याचमनं कुतः।।2
निर्मलस्य कुतः स्नानं, वस्त्रं विश्वोदरस्य च।3
निर्लेपस्य कुतो गन्धः, पुष्पं निर्वासनस्य च।।
निर्विशेषस्य का भूषा, कोऽलङ्कारो निराकृतेः।।4
नित्यतृप्तस्य नैवेद्यं, ताम्बूलं च कुतो विभोः।।
स्वयं प्रकाशमानस्य, कृतो नीराजनं विभोः।।
अन्तर्बहिश्च पूर्णस्य, कथं निर्वासनं भवेत्।।

fied with His own nature there is no need of libations. A betel leaf is useless for one that is full of all bliss. No lamps are necessary for one that is the illuminator of the sun etc. It is impossible to perambulate one that is Infinite, or to weigh one that has no body. It is impossible to send away Him who is within all and without all.

(Sankaracharya

(18)

The Inanimate can never give any fruit what-

....

निरञ्जनस्य किं धूपैः, दीपैर्वा सर्वसाक्षिणः।

निजानन्दैकतृप्तस्य, नैवद्यं किं भवेदिह।।

विश्वानन्दयितुस्तस्य, किं ताम्बूलं सप्रकल्पते।

स्वयं प्रकाशचिद्रूपो योऽसावर्कादिभासकः।

गीयते श्रुतिभिस्तस्य, नीराजनविधिः कुतः।।

प्रदक्षिणमनन्तस्य, प्रमाणोऽद्वयवस्तुनः।

अन्तर्बहिः संस्थितस्य, उद्वासनविधिः कुतः।।

Quoted from the works of Sri Sankaracharya Vol. 18 निर्गुणमानसपूजा Vani Vilas Press, Shri Rangam, p. 107-108

soever.[1] There fore nobody should ever worship an inanimate object nor should anybody expect good fruit from a false or improper worship.

-Madhvacharya in his commentary of Chhandogya Upanisat. 7-14-o.

(19)

Inanimate, false and improper things should not be worshipped as they lead to fruitlessness or undersirable fruit.[1]

Ibid.

(20)

If one thing is worshipped in the place of another, it does not produce desired result, any, it may lead to harm, as a servant respected in place of the king.[2] Just as homage due to the king, if offered to a servant, leads to the displeasure of and punishment by the king, similarly if a man worships other things in place of God, they all hurl him into darkness; therefore one should not do so. Inanimate, unworthy and illusory objects should never be worshipped as they

....

1 न ह्यचेतनकं किञ्चित्, फलदं स्यात्कदाचन।

तस्मादचेतनोपासां, न कुर्यात्क्वापि कश्चन।

न चासत्यां न चायोग्यां, यदीच्छदुत्तमं फलम्।।

lead to undersirable results.

-Ibid.

(21)

A Fetish should not be supposed as visnu. The fetish[1] is not visnu. False worship is fruitless. Whoever worships as Visnu, his own self or an image or another god or another animate or inanimate object, -What sin does that man not commit?-a thief and godless person? if one thing is supposed as another, or worshipped as another, it is very harmful to the worshipper-much more the Almightly God. Therefore an

....

(माध्व–छान्दोग्योपनिषत् 7/14 भाष्य में उपासना लक्षण नामक ग्रंथ से उद्धृत श्लोक)

1 अचेतनासत्यायोग्यान्यनुपास्यन्यफलत्वविपर्ययाभ्याम्।।
इति सं. कर्षणसूत्रम्। (माध्व छान्दोग्य भाष्य में उद्धृत सर्वमूल पृ0 630)

2 न ह्यन्यदन्यदित्येव, ध्यातं स्यात्पुरुषार्थदम्।
अनर्थश्च भवेत्तस्माद्, भृत्ये राजेति बोधवत्।।
राजपूजां यथा भृत्ये, कुर्याद्राजा हिनस्ति हि।
तद्वशत्वात्तथा भृत्यः, एवं नामादिकं च यः।।
उपास्ते ब्रह्मरूपेन, तं ब्रह्माथेतरापि च।
पातयन्ति तमस्यन्धे, तस्मान्नेक्षेत तांस्तथा।।
अचेतनमयोग्यं च, तथैवातात्त्विकं च यत्।
नोपासीत परोऽनर्थः, स्यात्तथोपासनाकृतः।।

object should always be known and resorted to as it actually is: this gives man his desired object and it never fails. Therefore illusory things should not be worshipped-this is the opinion of those who know the Vedas. There is no solace in worshipping an inanimate object in place of God.

(Ibid.)

(22)

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. (*Exodus*, chapter 20, verses 4.)

....

(माध्व छान्दोग्य 7/14 भाष्य में ''सामसंहिता'' नामक ग्रन्थ से उद्धृत श्लोक) सर्वमूल पृ. 630

1 ''न प्रतीके न हि सः'' इस वेदान्त सूत्र के भाष्य में श्री मध्वचार्य के श्लोक ''अनुव्याख्यान'' में
प्रतीकविषयत्वेन, न कार्या विष्णुभावना।
प्रतीकं नैव विष्णुर्यद्, मिथ्योपासा ह्यनर्थदा।।
स्वात्मानं, प्रतिमां वापि, देवतान्तरमेव वा।।
चेतनाचेतनं वान्यद्, ध्यायेद् यः केशवस्त्विति।
किं तेन न कृतं पापं, चोरेणेशापहारिणा।।
यत्किंचिदन्यथा संस्थम्, अन्यथाध्यातमंजसा।
ध्यातुर्महादोषकरं, किमु सर्वेश्वरो हरिः।।
तस्माद् वस्तु यथारूपं, ज्ञेयं ध्येयं च सर्वदा।
कारणं पुरुषार्थस्य, नान्यथा भवति क्वाचित्।।
प्रतीकसंस्तितत्वेन, ध्येयो विष्णुर्न चान्यथा।

(23)

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. (II *Corinthians*, Chapter X, Verse 4.)

(24)

Say, verily I am forbidden to worship the false deities with ye invoke besides God.

(The *Qoran*, chapter IV (cattle)

....

उत्कर्ष आत्मनोऽपि स्यात्, चेतनत्वादचेतनात्।।

तस्मादतत्त्वं नोपास्यम्, इति वेदविदां मतम्।।

अचेतनस्य ब्रह्मत्वध्याने तुष्टिर्न हि क्वाचित्।

नीचस्य स्वात्मताज्ञानात्, कुप्यति ब्रह्म लोकवत्।।

वेदान्त सूत्र अनुव्याख्यान सर्वमूल पृ. 223

CHAPTER XI
BASIS OF IDOLATRY

When so many eminent persons are against idolatry and they have spared no pains in waging war against it, one feels justified to ask "What is after all its basis and what sustains it?"

In answering this question satisfactorily it is necessary to follow minutely the development of different religions or religious movements. The students of mythologies and religions have spent much labour in tracing different forms of worship to their origin, and this is no doubt an interesting study. You just read a few chapters of the Old Testament and you will find prophets of Judaism trying to pursue constantly the uphill task of uprooting idolatry and idolatry raising its head again and again even among their devoted follwers. The efforts of the Hindu saints of the last four or five centuries also point the same way. They do not appear to be iconoclasts like the apostles of the Bible or the Qoran. But nevertheless, they are alive to the pernicious effects of idolatry and try to minimise them in their own way. Not prepared to overhual the structure of the Hindu Society by raising an open revolt against popular forms of worship

and yet deploring the gross ignorance in which the worshipping populace is found steeped, they endeavour to direct the mind of the worshipper towards the so-colled esoteric side of the worship. The famous popular verse:

Atma main ganga bahe Kyon nahin tu nahave[1]

"There is flowing the stream of the Ganges in thy inner self. Why dost thou not bathe in it?"

is very typical. It shows that the poet feels keenly the fruitlessness of bathing in the river Ganges for obtaining salvation. But instead of attacking the superstition direct, he chooses to adopt the roundabout way. How far his attempts are successful is a question. Let me imagine the poet standing on the bank of the Ganges and addressing the crowd that has come to have a dip in the sacred river with the main object of getting "heaven". He does not say "It is frivolous to expect heavenly bliss from these physical action." He simply says: "There is another stream which you cannot afford to ignore, i.e., the stream flowing in the inner self." I see with my mental eye, a few nodding their heads in appreciation and perhaps in ecstasy too, but their later behaviour shows that

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1 आत्मा में गंग बहे क्यों नहीं तू नहावे

the effect is too superficial and the current of popular thought and action has not changed its course. Read Tukarama, the saint of the Southern India, or the Lingait Saint, Ambiga Chauryya and you will find the same thing.

Some persons read a deeper meaning in it. They think that idolatry is ingrained in the very nature of man and it is futile to condemn it. The utmost that you can do is to refine it by means of subtle interpretations. But it is difficult to agree with these easy-goers. It is always less costly to swim with the stream, but the question is whether you can save you boat from dashing against the dangerous rocks that lies in the way.

It is as mistaken to suppose that love of idolatry is innate in man as to say that man is by nature ignorant or that disease is ingrained in the very nature of the body. While on one side there is a phenomenon of common people falling back to idolatry, there is also another phenomenon, no less significant, of thinkers expressing their disapproval directly or indirectly. Both the phenomena demand explanation and deserve full justice. There are diseases on the one side, and hospitals on the other. There is hardly anybody totally free from disease. But disease is not the object of the body, nor can it be tolerated,

or efforts to cure it, condemaned. The well-being of the animal depends upon the healthy and disease-free condition of the body and it can be secured only by fighting against the forces that occasion disease. Similary idolatry is a religious disease and needs being guarded against.

If you classify all the forms of idolatry prevalent in the world, you can put them under the following broad heads:-

(1) Idols representing the incarnations of God.
(2) Idols representing the prophets or saints.
(3) Idols symbolizing certain virtues.
(4) Idols supposed to be imbued with life by invocation.
(5) Idols set up by miscarried analogy.

Those who believe that God incarnates and comes into flesh hold that in order to remember that particular incarnation it is necessary to have an image of Him. The Theory of incarnation is the cornerstone of all such worship. Krisna was the God-incarnate. So was Rama. So were many others. Even Jesus Christ is held as God-incarnate.

This theory of God's coming into flesh has greatly misled those who claim to be monotheists. All monotheism begins with the principle that there is one and only one God, who governs this Universe.

He is almighty, all-pervading, all-knowing and all-governing. And what does polytheism say? That there may be one Highest God, but there are many lesser Gods or Great God's agents who work in their own spheres like the satraps of a mighty emperor. This doctrine of God's governing the universe through satraps is very popular, because it appeals to people's imagination. They everyday see that their king needs so many Viceroys and Governors to help him in the administration of the country and it is natural for them to extend the analogy to God. But they forget that in God's case, these is no occasion for the application of the analogy. No earthly king is almighty or all-pervading or all-knowing the king does not know even what is being done behind the wall. No doubt, every king wishes to govern, but his power, knowledge and means are strictly limited and for every small thing, he has to depend, not only upon big Viceroys, but upon ordinary menials. The king needs agents not because he is the king, but because his powers are limited. God is our King so far as He governs but He is much more than a King. His powers are perfect and unlimited. I shall keep no watchmen if it were in my power to see my things with my own eyes. To think that God needs agents to govern the universe is to condemn Him as a weak king. It is God's power that works

through different channels. Different forces of nature are not so many beings, but merely different ways of the expression of the powers of the same being. It is a pity that anthropomorphism has led people to drag God down to the level of earthly kings and imbued Him with all limitations that the human mind could think of. To "incarnate" or "come into flesh", for whatever reason, is the necessity of the soul and not of God, as a being that is complelled, by any circumstances earthly or unearthly, to act as a man or even to ape as such, is no God and cannot command our worship or even reverence. God is unchangeable. No change can overtake Him. Even a spontaneous desire to change Himself is unimaginable in God. God is a "being" and He cannot be "becoming". There is such a close kinship between the theory of God's incarnation and idol worship that most images are either of the deities or deified objects, and as long as deifying which is another word for God-making process will continue, idolatry cannot leave man. Man worships idols or images because he thinks that they remind him of the forms which God once took in order to performs some extraordinary deeds. And what are those extraordinary deeds? Not the needs which only God can perform and none else. No incarnation is credited with creating, sustaining or destroying the

world.[1] the only exceptional action associated with incarnation in to punish an evil-doer or to help a devotee. The famous verse of the Bhagvat Gita is often quoted:-

Paritranaya Sadhunam,
Vinasaya tu Duskritam,
Dharama Sansthapanarthaya,
*Sambhavami Yuge Yuge.**2***

"To protect the Good, to destroy the wicked and to establish righteousness, I take my birth, in different ages." Here are three things enumerated, (1) the protection of the good, (2) the destruction of the wicked, (3) the establishment of righteousness. If you look at the purpose of the creation of the world, you will find that it inheres all the three.* God does it even without incarnating. Every action of God aims at this. Why should God incarnate in order to kill Ravana or Kansa, when he could bring them into be-

....

1 जन्माद्यस्य यतः (वेदान्त 1/1/2/)
2 परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशय तु दुष्कृताम्।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे।। (गीता)

**Vide Reason and Religion by G. Upadhyaya, Chapters IX and XI.*

ing without such process? Is it more difficult to kill than to create? In order to meet this objection, many frivolous anecdotes# have been fabricated which can only appeal to the most credulous and one need not refer to them here. They do display the ingenuity of the story-framers, but do not save God from their debasing implications. God must indeed be too childish if he falls a victim to such dodges and has no far-sightedness enough to detect their trickery.

There is one more point. Even if, for arguments' sake, we admit the hypothesis of God's incarnating habits, the forms which God takes while incarnating, dissolves itself when His flesh-life ends, and God returns to His original fleshless, formless and invisible nature, doing ordinary world-creating, world-sustaining and world-dissolving business without any help whatsoever of the body. What it, then, the value of His incarnation for those, during whose life, he does not appear in the incarnated forms? For them, there remains nothing except to derive their notions about and conception of God from the observation of the universe and the introspection of their own nature. If idol were meant to remind the

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The anecdotes concerning the austerities performed by Ravana and the boon he got from God for overcoming death.

deeds of those old and no longer existing incarnations, there are myriads of objects before our eyes which remind us of th God that pervades through them even now and is present in our heart ready to hear our inner voice or respond to our prayers. We can take the help of images in case of those who are no longer with us. But God is always with us. Why have resort to those forms, which might only hypothetically be imagined as belonging to Him in some past time, but are no longer His?

Next come the idols representing prophets and saints. Their case is a little different from that of incarnations. They were men and therefore, their representations can easily serve as their commemorations. But mere representations, whether statues, idols, images, pictures or the like, do not form idolatry. There is a clear difference between idols and idol-worship. Idols do not constitute of idol-worship unless there is lirking behind them an idea of mysterious divinity and adoration. The emperor's picture on the coin or on a postage stamp is not idolatry, because nobody adores it. Similarly the statues of kings, queens, heroes or warriors are not idolatry, becuase though a means of commemoration, they are not the object of worship. The image of Maruti or Hanuman often kept in the wrestling arenas of southern India

is generally worshipped by the wrestlers. They have a belief that the presence of the God Maruti would mysteriously make them brave. This belief makes them bow down before the image, make offerings, and pray to the image that the God which the image represents may come to their help. They think that when they are saying their prayers before the image the God maruti hears their prayer and responds to it. This is much more than commemoration and the real venom lies here. This is the line of demarcation between the mere commemoration for the sake of inspiration and idolatry. The line is originally very thin and at times it is difficult to detect where commemoration ends and idolatry begins. But the process is so subtle that very soon commemoration falls into the background and the gorssest form of idolatry takes its place. This you will find in the case of all heroes. Gautama Buddha was no idol-worshipper, nor he preached that his own image should be worshipped by his followers. If he said "Come and seek refuge with Buddha," he meant thereby living and real Buddha and not his representation. But when Buddha died, the process of commemoration began in the form of keeping his ashes, or tooth or any part of the body or object that might have any association with his person. This was quite innocent in the beginning. But

human weakness gravitated and temples arose; idols were set up and all the good and bad paraphernalia that accompanies idolatry came into existence. It appears that for long periods of time the whole Buddhist world, high and low has devoted the best of their lives and energy to making idols of the great Buddha and worshipping him.

Our own times provide numerous examples. In the Travancore State, near the railway station Varkala, There is a Matha of a Saint named Sri Narayana Guru Soami. I was told that he was a great reformer of his caste and his chief work was to teach worship of one God. He is said to have ten lacs of followers. I saw the shrine and found that not only his tomb or samadhi, but even the cot on which he died is being worshipped and on a fixed day of the year his followers gather there in a great fair to pay reverence to their preceptor and actually undo his life work, not knowing what they do. In 1921 when Mahatma Gandhi first marshalled his non cooperation momement against the British Government and the agitation assumed a huge proportions, not only his idols began to be sold and kept in the houses as something holy, but he was also accredited with miracles. Now somehow that process has come to a standstill because Mahatma himself does not lend any encour-

agement, but it is to be seen what forms his worship takes after him and what legends are fabricated by his blind followers. The danger is real. It is not an innocent pastime to keep up religiosity among the masses. It is anti-religious and lets loose those force which instead of stimulating spirituality kills it outright and turns innocent populace not into saints, but into sheep. Legends and miracles are woven and interwoven round real, half real and unreal personalities;* till there is such a huge and dark forest of superstition that the coming reformer finds it extremely difficult to take remedial measures.

** cf.-"A prophet is not only a successor of the Shaman and the Magician; in Monotheistic religions he is very often a substitute for one or other of the tribal gods and pagan deities. It is now a well established fact that many of the Christian saints are really transformed local deities: a thin veneer of Christianity was thrown over them to win over their devotees, and their cults were perpetuated with a Charistian sig-nificance. Many of the major festivals of Charistianity are realy pagan festivals. The social instinct of man has never taken kindly to the idea of a solitary personal God and has ever tried to furnish him with associates, as in polytheism, or with subordinate companion or personified qualities, like angels and Yazatas, most of whom were originally independent deites of the old polytheism or Gods of other tribes now incorporated within the monotheistic religious commu*

There is another type of idols which do not represnt any historical or semi-historical personage. They are symbols of certain abstract Virtues. For exampel Sarasvati is the Hindu goddess of learning and kali a goddess of bravery and righteous indignation against the evil-doers. It is said in defence of such idolatry that it is natural with human mind to concertise the abstract. The poet, the painter and the priest all combine to produce symbolization. The poet fancies out similes and metaphors. The painter turns the figurative speech into beautiful pictures, the sculptor gives those picture a solid shape and the

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nity. In christianity, where the Jewish angels figure as colourless as the Brahmanic Gods do in Buddhism, a Persistent tendency towards trinitarianism satisfies the social instinct in relation to God. Muhamadanism, which began with a denunciaton of this "Tritheistic" tendency of Christianity, itself retained the angels as an integral part of the creed and latterly developed a theory of saints much on the lines of Roman Catholicism which believed in the heavenly intercessors. All these show the innate weakness of the human mind, which is incapable of resting content with a unitary divinity and has a tendency to lapse either into polytheism, or into angelolatry or into prophet worship." (Hari Das Bhattacharya's "The Foundation of Laving Faiths",Vol. I, page 44)

priest infuses divinity into what was up till now a gross and inanimate object.

I admit that there is nothing unnatural in symbolization. But it is also natural that humanity should fall down through negligence, carelessness and selfish greed, if limits are not kept up. Symbolization has its limits and it becomes not only grotesque, but pernicious, if not checked at a proper stage. Many similes and metaphors are very beautiful and illumining as long as they remain verbal and become horrible ridiculous in the hands of the painter of sculptor. For instance "Ranjit singh was the lion of the Panjab," is a beautiful metaphor. The hearer of the sentence at once knows that Ranjitsingh's bravery is being referred to and other features of the "animals lion' are totally ignored. Even the most ignorant and uneducated man would make no mistake in understanding the meaning. But if the painter's pencil begins to work, Ranjitsingh would be represented as a lion with tail and paws and fearful jaws roaming in a bushy jungle. And lo! the whole thing changes. The metaphorical effect is all gone. All symbolization has disppeared and with it, all its value. The whole things has become too gross and too mischievous. Most of the horrid images of Hindu and Greek mythology are the results of this meddle someness of the painter

and the sculptor. They might have been originally innocent, but they provided an easy material to the ignorant, selfish and at times, mischievous priest. When once the ball is set rolling, it is well nigh impossible to check it. What beings with aesthetic motives dwindles into unethical and demoralizing practices. many movements old and modern testify to this danger. Hari Das Bhattacharya's following quotation is very apt:-

Nor is allegorical interpretation of dubious doctrines and shady practices always a safe procedure, especially when religious matters are taught through unbecoming symbols. Debasing thoughts and practices have a tendency to be taken *in their utter literalness in total disregard of their esoteric philosophy and ethics;* the licentious rites that grew round vegetation myths and divine amours practically in very religion of antiquity should caution us against adhering to a debased creed with allegorical interpretation, solely for the sake of continuing ancestral beliefs. A religion that is inherently incapable of sufficient rationalisation and moralisation for the advancing spiritual needs of humanity many be given artificial respiration for some time, but it will never completely revive. Even devotionalism has its peculiar language for each stage of culture: the Sankirtana

that made Navadvipa mad in the 16th century, and is still a potent force for religious excitement in suitable temperaments, can hardly be revived under modern conditions as a method of mass conversion- it has a limited appeal to modern minds, grown sceptical about the religious value of ecstatic trance and sceptical about the religious value of esstatics trance and sceptical about the religious value of ecstatic trance and emotional frenzy."

(Vide Foundations of Living Faiths, Vol. I, page 30)

Priest-craft goes still further. The sculptor makes a lifeless statue, but the priest quickens breath into it. He performs certain rituals known in Hinduism by the name Prana Pratisthia or consecration ceremony and the laity thinks that by so doing the life-less image has become a living being, fit to accept offerings, hear prayers and be responsive. The everyday ceremonials in Hindu temples have gone to a ridiculous length. Symbolism has evaporated altogether and its place has been taken by absurd rites. Feeding the idols, lulling them to sleep and fanning them during summer or covering them with quilts in winter is a common practice in all temples in Matura, Brindaban and elsewhere. In the Minaksi temple of Mudura, I was shown by the priest a room where Siva and Parvati are closeted together at night in a conjugal fashion. A shrewd Pandit may try to explain all this by sophisticated methods, but if you question pilgrims, they will tell you that the idols do indulge in carnal enjoyments as we common people do. They do not know that Prana Pratistha is a device to create faith among the masses. Priests know that as long as people would think the idols as inanimate objects, their faith in their divine nature would remain weak and shakable. Therefore they make out that after the Prana Pratistha rites the idol no longer remains as idol: it becomes God or Goddess. But how hypocritical it is can be easily seen by those who have eyes to see. Everybody knows that the idol is as inanimate after the Prana-Pratistha ceremony as it was before. No sign of breath in visible, no motion, no responsiveness*.

Question- So long as we do not invite the God with the recital of the vedic verses, He does not come. he comes by invitation and goes when bidden farewell to.

Answer- If the god comes by the invitation with Vedic verses, then why does the image not become animate, and why does He not go when bidden farewell to? Where does He come from? and where does He go to? Hear, you Simpletons, the all-pervading God neither comes nor goes.

The change is not in the idol, but in the belief of the worshipper. He has begun to believ in what does not actually exist. He has deceived himself. There is no power in the priests to make a lifeless thing living. Mere recital of mantras or certain other ritulas can do nothing. In fact, They do nothing. It is a plain as broad daylight. It needs no proof. But the priests spread false stories about the actions of these idols and the credulous laity readily believes them. The priests know actual facts, but they conceal them from the public and represent them wrongly for selfish motives. Thus the priests and the temples become so many forces of darkness instead of light: ignorance instead of knowledge, superstition instead of spirituality. Most of the images are the result of miscarried analogy. Phallic worship which is so very common in India in so many indecent forms, seems to have been originated from the analogy of man's birth from the conjugation of father and mother. Murray Aynsley in his "Symbolism of the East and West"*

If you can call God with the power of your Vedic verses, then with the same formula why can you not call the departed soul of your son to the dead body and why can you not kill your enemy by sending away his soul from his body?
(Swami Dayanand's "The Light of Truth," ChapterXI).

quotes the following passage from Mrs. Childs' Chapter on Egypt.

"Reverence for the mystery of organized life led to the recognition of a masculine and feminine principle in all things spiritual and material. Every elemental force was divided into two, the parents of other forces. The active wind was masculine, the passive mist, or inert atmosphere was feminine. Rocks were masculine, the productive earth was feminine. The presiding deity of every district (Nome) was represented as a Triad or Trinity. At Thebes it was Amun, the creative wisdom, Neith, the spiritual mother, and a third supposed to represent the Universe. At Philae, it was Oseiris, the generating cause, Isis, the receptive mould, and Horus, the Result. The Sexual emblems everywhere conspicuous in the sculptures of their temples would seem impure in descriptions, but no clean and thoughtful mind could so regard them while witnessing the obvious simplicity and solemnity with which the subject is treated."*

Mrs. Child has here taken the most generous view possible, but every Hindu who has read or heard the legends associated with the worship of siva Linga and described in the Siva Purana in so many details,

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** See page 20.*

would bear out that the philosophy of life hinted above sinks deep in the bottom and indecency and voluptuousness float on the surface with all the mischief they can create. The sculptures on the temple of Jagannatha at Puri in Orissa bring nothing but shame to the originators and perpetrators of the whole show. No purpose of explaining the mystery of the production of life is served thereby. On the contrary gross superstition is the result. Small phallic-shaped stones, so formed by the constant action of water on stone and found so aboundantly at Hardwar and elsewhere, are commonly looked upon as Siva-linga and white or black threads visible, due to a different type of stratum coming between, are regarded as sacred threads, credulity never allowing people to enquire as to the proper place of sacred threads in the body.

CHAPTER XII
SOME ARGUMENTS EXAMINED

Whatever the origin of idolatry, its supporters advance many arguments in its favour and though the anti-idolatry campaign goes on from age to age and country to country, sometimes furiously and at other times feverishly, idolatry does find in a new age, new support and new supporters.The vulgar follows a practice without bothering with its why and wherefore. But a polishied man fortifies his actions with reasonings, sometimes logical and sometimes half-logical or even illogical. There is such an inseparable connection between faith and intellect that the doer of a practice finds immense satisfaction at the idea that whatever he is doing is doing is supported by reason also.

The arguments in favour of idolatry can be divided into three classes:-

(1) The actual idolater's arguments, which honestly and innocently explain the position taken up by the worshipper.

(2) The Philosopher's arguments which are characterized by his soarings into high regions unapproachable by common intellect.

(3) The preacher's arguments which have a good deal of hair- splitting, whose main object is to vanquish the adversary and ensnare the public.

The real idolater worships idols because his conception of God is very vague. He has been given to understand that all roads lead to Rome and that as long as he has a faith in worship whether he understood it or not, his religious future is quite safe. Devotion and not reasoning is his theme. If you press him further, he will frankly aver that he understands little, and that his duty is only to follow the faith chalked out by his elders or by tradition. He is never clear in his mind whether he is worshipping the idol or the god whose name is associated with it; wheter he is contemplating the attributes of the deity or observing the feature of the image or mysteriously trying to please the deity of whose whereabouts he knows very little. he cannot say whether the deity he is so worshipping is in the image, or has come to stay in the image in response to his invitation and invocation or is in the image by supposition only. He does not know whethre the object of his worship is historical, legendary or imaginary. He is not certain whether the image before him hears him, or the deity represented by the image responds to him, directly or through the image. The best phrase that can de-

scribe the idolater's mental attitude is groping in the dark. He gropes and gropes and gropes and is satisfied with it. His ambitions never go further. He is in the dark and wishes to remain in the dark. He does not want light. If you throw any beam of light upon him by interrrogation, he resents it and shudders at it. He feels that mental analysis might make him a renegade and therefore he avoids it. Not that he cannot reason. Among Idolaters you will find best lawyers whose legal acumen is awe-inspiring; professors of logic whose fallacy- detecting capacity is unquestionable; shrewd politicians who clearly see the invisible forces working in the domain of world politics; traders from whose keen eye, no corner of the world market is hidden; financiers who can successfully combat the dodges of exploiters; astronomers whose knowledge of the heavenly bodies is much more clear than of their own house; and mathematicians well versed in the intricacies of mathematical calculations. They are all intellectuals and you will find them worshipping in temples as devoutly as their uneducted brothers and sisters, side by side with them, and as vaguely too. Intellect they have, and highly developed too. But its use is confined to mundane affairs only They believe that devotion and reasoning can never go together, and it is sheer blasphemy to

try to bring them together. They fear that their so do ing might result in a terrible explosion. Or perhaps it is unfair to say that they believe this, or believe that; fear this or fear that. In fact their minds are quite empty as far as these matters are concerned. Such are our rear idolaters. You will find them ninety-nine per cent so, if you honestly examine them.

But there is a small percentage-infinitesimally small though-who love to indulge in philosophical speculations. When actually worshipping, they are little different from common image-worshippers. They observe all practices in minute details without any hitch or botheration. But while common people shudder at the idea of reasoning about their gods or goddesses, these philosophically disposed persons try to philosophize. They wish to fortify faith with reasoning. Apart from actual worship, when they are at leisure they weave out certain arguments which give their idolatry a scientific shape. We shall examine here a few typical ones.

No.1.

"God is infinite and we are finite. It is difficult for the finite to have a true conception of the infinite.Idolization brings the infinite within the range of the finite and enables us to have a glimpse of it."

The absurdity of the argument in clear at the very face of it. The purpose of the worship was to realize the conception of the Infinite. First of all, it is not possible for us to drag the infinite down to the level of the finite. The Infinite does not dance at our suggestions and cannot change itself to please us or to suit our convenience. Secondly, whatever glimpses we thus have are the glimpses, not of the Infinite, but of the gross object which lies before us. If by worshipping the idol, you are satisfied that you have realized god. it is your self delusion and can be easily seen by a little introspection. A man may think himself learned while he is not, or a king while he is not. Who can check him from doing so? but the fact is that an idol worshipper remains an idol-worshipper all his life and does not rise an inch above.

To say that the finite cannot realize the conception of the Infinite is a verbal jugglery. You say that if you realize the Infinite, you make him finite, as he has come within your finite ken and is no longer Infinite. But the fact is that the finite is not ill suited to relize the infinite nature of the infinite, by trying to find its limits and to fail. A bird flies in the sky and thinks that it will soon reach its limits. But when it is tired and finds the end of the sky receding further and further, it concludes that the sky is limitless.

Similary when trying to have a conception of God, the soul finds that however high it may soar, it cannot get at the end, the conception of the infinitude of the infinite dawns upon it. The worshippers's aim is to know God and not to know the whole of Him. A child knows its mother so far as she is its mother. To know the whole of the mother is impossible for it and unnecessary too. I know that God is my God. This satisfies me. He may be much more than that. I cannot know it. My not being able to know it means that He is Infinite and I have a glimpse of His infinitude. Idols are an obstacle in our way of having this realization.

No.-2

"God is *Invisible.* We cannot see Him.*

बिनु पद चले सुने बिनु काना। बिनु कर कर्म करे विधि नाना।
(तुलसीदास.रामायण)

"He walks without feet, and hears without ears. Without hands he does all sarts of actions. (Tulsidas in the Ramayan)"

अपाणि पादो जवानो ग्रहीता। पश्यत्युचक्षुः स शृणोत्यकर्णः। (श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद् 3/19).

"Without hands he grasps and without feet he walks. He sees without eyes and hears without ears." (Svetasvatara Upanisat 3-19)

Therefore we make his representations, so that we might satisfy our cravings to see Him."

When God is Invisible, how can He be represented by visible object? Visibility means grossness; grossness means limitations. The form you see is not God's but of the idol; the size you see is not God's but of the idol; the colour you see is not God's but of the idol. In fact, whatever is visible to your physical eyes belongs to the idol and has no connection whatsoever with the nature of God. Whever in Scriptures, there is a meantion of "seeing" God, it is all figurative and means "realization." it is very unfortunate that the world is mad after seeing Him who cannot be seen with the physical eye, after hearing Him who cannot be heard with physical ears. The upanisat clearly warns against this delusion when it says, "He is not sound, He is not touch, he is not form, He is not divisible."*

This all means that the eye cannot see God and it is a vain quest on the part of man to try to see Him. People are mad after seeing Him. They observe all sorts of practices, undergo all sorts of austeri-

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** अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययम्! (कठोपनिषत्)*

@ Mohammad going to heaven on the horse named Buraq in order to converse with God, or God appearing before Dhurva and other Hindu saints.

ties, bear all sorts of privations in order that they might see the invisible. The Hindu puranas and other mythologies as well as other serious religious scriptures contain stories that encourage this quest. There are anecdotes of persons who performed such and such austerity for such and such period and God was in the end pleased to present Himself to the devotee in His bodily shape. The prophets are said to have travelled to heaven in order to have a talk with the almighty.@ these descriptions, if figurative, are generally taken in their literalness and devotionally disposed people feel a sort of itch to get the same result. The crea dulity of the devotees provides an easy market for the hypocrite who contrives various devices to ensnare the credulous. Ignorance about the true nature of God, fabricated or exaggerated stories of the past saints, temptations to ensnare common people and delusive elementary successes all continue to produce a mischievous circle from which the simple worshipper finds it difficult to free himself. How the whole thing happens may be just explained. When your eyes are open, you see light. You know that this light is not God. It is physical light. But when you shut your eyes, you begin to see an inner light-vague glamour, something translucent in which the visibility of light is felt, but no object seen. The so-called

guru tells you that this is divine light, just a beginning of the visibility of God. If you keep your eye closed for a length of time, this light begins to be brighter especially due to suggestions and you think that you are comming nearer the desired object. But it is a mistake. When you close your eye, in fact you close the outer lids. The organ that sees is still working. It will see. If it cannot see outer light, it will see inner light. But the outer and the inner, both lights are physical and there is nothing divine in them. You thought that you closed your eye; while actually you did not. you are not yet beyond the threshold of your physical domain. You have simply shut yourself up from the outer physical world; but the inner physical world is there is your brain and your eye is busy with it. The upanisat says that God is Arupa (अरूप) or without a form. This light has a form. The Upanisat says that the eye cannot see Him. Here there is something that is visible to the eye. To think that this brightness is God's or God, is a mistake.

The auricular process is also similar to the ocular one. If your ears are open, you hear outer sounds. If you put fingers into your ears and press them tightly, the outer sounds are stopped and inner sounds begin to be heard. People think that these sounds come from God. Various mystic names have

been given to these sounds, e.g., *Anahada* (अनहद) and various sorts of practices are observed to further devolop this inner hearing. Here agian the same mistake. The Upanisat says that God is no sound. Here we are hankering after the sound. Putting fingers into the ears is not to close the hearing orgains. They are at works and vehemently too. The brain is full of sounds which are neither God Himself nor arising out of God. They are physical in every sense of the term and the ear which hears them is also physical.

I Think that more than eighty per cent. Religious nonsense would disappear and much fraud checked if the vain quest after seeing God is stopped. But how to stop it is a question. Vested interests do not suffer the market to be closed. If you close one market, New markets begin to be set up. The one thing that people need to be taught is that just as they cannot see their ownself and yet they feel that they are, similary God is invisible, will remain invisible and will never assume visibility under any circumstance or for any reason.

No. 3

"Admitted that idols cannot represent God, they have another utility. Some physical object is

necessary for concentrating the mind, and idols can serve that purpose."

Emphatically no! No idols, in any temple of the world, public or private, are ever used for concentrating the mind nor were they originally designed for this end. It is futile to achieve mental concentration in temples. If the reader does not agree with me he should go to any temple and make an experiment upon his own person or watch the devotees, educated and uneducated both. If you wish to practise concentration of mind, you shall have to be as away from temples and idols as possible. The mind-concentrating devices commonly in vogue in these days or in olden days do not consist of idols. It is not relevant here to discuss or examine the efficacy or even comparative value of these devices. They may have different degrees of utility, not as objects of worship, but as instruments of teaching elementary lessons in mindconcentration; but they do not come under the category of idolatry and it is unfair to drag them to the discussion in order to prove a thing which has not the remotest connection with it. If an object is required for concentrating the mind, a small black spot on a piece of paper is sufficient, or the tip of your finger will do. But will you call it idol worship? In sankhya Darsana, Kapila calls the Fully concentrated

mind one which has freed itself from all physical impressions or association.* In elementary lessons, it may be useful to choose some very tiny object. But we must remember that the selection of a tiny object means, in other words, exclusion of bigger objects, or narrowing down the range of vision to its irrreducible minimum. It is wrongly supposed that mind-concentration business needs a gross object. On the contrary, it needs elimination of gross factors as far as possible. The unconcentrated mind, before its training, was habituated to wander in gross objects of a very wide range. This wandering habit was the disease of which we wanted to cure the mind. Therefore, we tried to narrow the range of its ramblings, by fastening it to a very small tether and shortening the rope. The process is to minimize grossness and not to augment it. The object is to eliminate this grossness altogether. Between the elementary lesson and the desired end, there are intermediary stages where a tiny object, having the least possible grossness, is retained, or is allowed to linger. This retainment of an unavoidable element is no argument for worshipping idols. Idols with their thousand ornamental embellishments and historiecal or

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*ध्यानं निर्विषयं मनः (Kapila's Sankhya) Vi 225

legendary associations cannot but tend to increase mental wanderings and are no help in concentration. The process is just the reverse and increases the disease instead to curing it. No teacher of mind-concertration is so foolish as to advise you to go to the temple of Jagannatha at Puri, or Minaksi at Madura, or Siva temple at Ramesvaram for receiving your first lessons there. And if advanced in the practice, you will yourself find such places a great nuisance and fly from them if you want to make any progress.

No. 4

"God's creation reminds us of its creator. Are not the idols God's creation?"

Ultimately they are. But they tell us more about the sculptor and very little about God. All art has a tendency to conceal nature. If you see a beautiful statue, you will first think of the human sculptor who has given it this beautiful shape and may very likely forget the Great Maker of the original stone. A Picture on a paper reminds more of the painter than of the paper-makers; and paper, more of the paper-maker, than of God who created the original material. You may go to temples to see art and not nature.

They are the specimens of human workmanship which has thrown nature in the background and brought art into relief. The earth on which you are sitting, the sky which is above your head, the rivers, the hills and other objects where unadorned nature is visible in its stark nakedness do remind us that they have an intelligent maker and if you are trained to look behind things, you can get religious inspirations. But carvings on the temple doors or idols and their ornaments do just the contrary. Once I went or see the Taj with a friends. Near the gate there is a tank which had a very beautiful tiny rose flower. I asked my companion as to what was the most striking object there. He pointed to the towers and other fine carvings. His mind was a so engrossed with art that there was no margin left to observe the tiny flower which was ten thousnad times more artistic than the Taj. But human mind has such a partiality towards human workmanship, that he forgets God and His workmanship. If you are anxious to remember God by observing His Work, why have temples or idols? Your fingers will teach you all the lessons you need. Even a blade of grass, or the wing of a butterfly will do. The condition is that you have an eye to see.

No. 5

"God is all pervading. We do not worship idols, but God who is within them."

Honesty requires that we should refer to your personal experiences. We shall ask you to scrutinize the doings of your mind and leave you there. Courtesy and decency do not allow us to go further. If, howerver, you are bent upon pressing your dry logic, we can rebut your argument by saying that we admit that God is in the Idol, but you are not. How can you meet God at the place where he is, but you are not? the most proper place for the union of God and yourself is your own heart where God and you both reside.

No. 6

"Idol-worship may be quite proper. But it is expedient. It keeps up the religiosity of the masess who are unfit to understand finer things. If all idols and all temples are taken away. Then masses will be grossly irreligious. Something is better than nothing."

This expediency is more apparent than real. In fact it is idolatry that keeps the ignorant masses

always ignorant. They are by nature. religious. Religiosity is inherent in their very nature. If they are taught to worship God in a correct way, they will gradually improve. But they do not, because the priests and preachers misdirect their energies. They have been given to understand that bowing before the idols and presenting offerings is all that is required of them. You have not to go far to discover this fact. The pandas and their agents will try to take hold of you as soon you are within a hundred miles from a sacred place and will make your life miserable. Do you call all this religiosity? Is it the spiritual food you wish to give to your masses? Religiosity should make people intellectually and morally better. But it is making them worse. It is a simple sheepmaking process. It kills the germs of intelligence in them and makes them credulous. They become superstitious and cowardly. They tolerate the immoral deeds of their priests and preceptors. They lose all sense of righteous indignation. No doubt, something is better than nothing, but it should be something. *Nothing is much better than a wrong thing.* Nobody would eat poison because he has no food to, eat and if he does so, it will not prolong his life. Will you run after a wrong thing, because you cannot get a right thing?

Have you ever imagined what horrors idol

worship is doing under cover of religiosity?

The first loss which idolaters are doing to themselves is that they are running after will-o-the-wisp. They do not learn the right way of seeking their God. They are busy with the worship of anything but God. They are in a fool's Paradise and never think of coming out of it. For one, who has an aim of his life, it is a great loss, an irreparable loss, a loss which cannot be ignored. But it is only the negative side of the question and may not possibly be keenly felt. Positively speaking, the harm which idolatry is doing to the country and the society is so great that all other harms done in other ways dwindle into insignificance when compared with it.

Just imagine the number of animals being offered at the altar of the gods and goddesses all over the world in public places, on public occasions and in private houses to wards off calamities. If you are imaginative enough and can draw in your mind the picture of all the bloodshed that is going on in the name of religion, you will be horrorostruck. Such an immense loss of animal life is sufficient to condemn idolatry. It makes man callous, cruel and selfish. It produces in man's mind a conception that God is neither man, nor super-man, but a brute and that also of a terrible nature. Propitiation of the Almighty with

the blood of animals! How horrible! How wicked!

Then think of the public money that is being spent for the upkeep of temples. One great temple costs much more than a great university and one small shrine no less than a small school. The money that could have been utilized for the opening of educational institutions is being spent in encouraging forces of darkness. For, what are your temples, if not the dens of darkness? They are dark physically, dark morally, dark socially and dark intellectually- leave aside the question of spirituality. When the whole world is enjoying the benefit of broad sunshine outside, inside the temples you will find dim light of dim lamps, hardly sufficient to make the image roughly visible. This is the physical side. Morally? Less said, the better. It is this idolatry that is responsible for the creation of the institution of priestcraft, well-known for its craftiness, greed, voluptuousness and what not. These ignorant leaders of ignorant masses. Oh? They can do anything with impunity, nay with religious sanction. How many innocent ladies sacrifice their chastity? The mysteries of the temples are more horrible than the mysteries of Royal Courts. They remain hidden in the dark recesses of these so-called holy places and the public gets only a glimpse of them when some exceptional scandal finds its way

to the courts of law. There too, blind belief plays its part and devotees manage to forget the whole thing. If you have a measure to weigh the moral level of a poor ignorant peasant, who leaves his village to pay homage to a holy shrine for spiritual nourshment and compare it with the moral level of the priest who is meant to administer to his spiritual wants, the latter would be found wanting much in the balance. Innocence, sincerity, devotion on the side of the former, while craftiness, greed, dissimulation, and immorality on the side of the latter. Is it something, which you call better than nothing?

Socially. To set aside a class of people (as priests) for such nefarious trade means to dig our grave with our own hands. It is the priests that always militate against social reform. It is they who have created untouchables. At least in India, temple entry has become a problem. Poor worshippers are untouchable, while their hard-earned money is not only touchable, but swallowable. What would you think of a schoolmaster who looks down upon his pupils on account of their ignorance? Or what would you think of a doctor who does not touch his patients because they are suffering from impure disease? What was the justification of a school, if there were no ignorant pupils? It is in order to dispel ignorance that they

come to schools. It is in order to get the disease cured that the patients come to the hospitals. Similarly, the priest craft that keeps the laity socially, morally and intellectyually backward and throws constant obstacles in the path of progress has no justification to exist and the society that tolerates such things digs its own grave. You deck your idols with gold umbrellas (Chhatra) while your orphans are dying for want of a morsel. For lifeless, unreal representative of God you build palatial buildings, while the poor, the famished and the bereaved, those real representatives of God, are dragging on their piggish existence in miserable sties. Look at the big halls of the Ramesvaram temple. It could have accommodated a big university and changed the whole face of the southern India. The temple at Muttra and Brindaban which reverberate with the Wranglings of the pandas, could have easily been turned into magnificent colleges and evolved the potentialities of the people of the Brajadesa.

No. 7

Idols and temples have encouraged art."

This is perhaps the strongest and the most appealing argument, but at the same time the most irrelevant. Idolatry and art are two different and dis-

tinct things, different in origin, differnet in aims and different in nature. It is very unfortunate that they should be yoked together. Those who denounce idolatry never mean to condemn, ignore or under-rate art. The value of art, as a humanizing force is beyond all disputes, above all questions. Art has an intrinsic value and must stand on its own legs. It is derogatory for art to depend or to be made to depend upon such an ungodly institution as idolatry. Who will not admire the exceptional grandness of art for which the temples of the southern India are so very famous? The monumental workmanship exhibited therein is marvellous. But who will not deplore the use of the capabilities of the artist for no better cause. Surely there could be conceived causes, much more ennobling than indecent pictures on the temples of Jagannatha and other places, or the stone representations of the fantastic stories of the Puranas. The help that art is lending to idolatry is misplaced. The evil that idolatry is doing, much outweighs the good that accompanying art is able to do. It is surely a great violence done to art that it should be tied to the wheels of the wretched cart of idolatry and dragged behind. Why confuse two things? A beautiful ornament may be worn by a pious lady as well as by a woman of doubtful chastity; what has the workmanship of the smith to do with the na-

ture of the wearer? Idolatry may be good or may be bad. Art too, may be good or may be bad. Why should there be an inseparable association between them? If idolatry has a merit, its merit will not be marred by the absence of art. And if it has demeries, no art however grand in itself, can help it. Idolatry should be examined on its own merits.

It is not always idolaters that are the custodians of art. They Moghals were not idolaters, but they developed some of the finest arts, both painting and sculpture. There is much in the Rajput paintings without having any background of idolatry. It is a matter of satisfaction that now in India, as also elsewhere, art is developing on new lines.

No. 8

"Are we not all idol worshippers in one way or other? Does not the fond young lover worship the God be thinks be sees in his fair mistress? Does not the fond mother worship the tiny babe in her arms? Do not the patriot worship an abstract idea, the miser his board, the agriculturist his richly laden fields? Are they not all idol-worshippers? The craving for idol worship is in our very blood."

The above is an extract from the letter of a

young and highly educated friend who has just returned from England and represents a type. In answer to the above querries I should say an emphatic 'no'. Those who have followed the thread of reasoning in this book will bear with me that *excessive attach ment to a person or an object is neither worship nor idol-worship.* I do not worship the mango I eat, nor the house I live in, nor the horse I ride. Why confuse two things which are so very distinct? I fear that my friends's poetic imagination goes too far and leaves the matter-of fact world far behind.

No. 9

"At the very outset, I may tell you that there is no polytheism in India. In every temple, if one stands by and listens, one will find the worshippers applying all the attributes of God, including omnipresence to the images." ...."The tree is known by its fruits. When I have seen amongst them that are called idolaters, men the like of whom in morality and spirituality and love, I have never seen anywhere, I stop and ask myself, ;Can sin beget holiness/""...............

"My brethren, we can no more think about anything without a mental image than we can live

without breathing. By the law of association the material image call up the mental idea and vice versa. This is why the Hindu uses an external symbol when he worships. He will tell you it helps to keep his mind fixed on the Being to whom be prays. He knows as well as you do, that the image is not God, is not omnipresent............. The Hindus have associated the ideas of holiness, purity, truth, omnipresence and such other ideas with different images and forms ....He (the Hindu) does not abuse any one's idol or calls its worship sin. He recognizes in it a necessary stage of life. 'The child is father of the man'. Would it be right for an old man to say that childhood is a sin or youth a sin?
....

Idolatry in India does not mean anything borrible. it is not the mother of harlots. On the other hand, it is the attempt of the undeveloped minds to grasp high spiritual truths." ....(Swami Vivekanand's paper on Hinduism, PP. 25-30)

While we pay our homage to the revered Swami for his patriotism as well as for his unprecedented advocacy of Hindu civilization in the west, we cannot help expressing surprize at these too bold assertions of his. We may be held guilty of irreverence if we say that the assertions quoted above are

full of inaccuracies. But truth is truth. To say that "There is no polytheism" in India is to betray utter unawareness of facts. The puranas are full of plurality of gods and goddesses, their births, their marriages, their quarrels and what not. And all orthodox pundits and their followers have a belief in them. If one honestly questions millions of Hindu idolaters in any village or temple or religious fair, barrings a few sophisticated persons, they will all corroborate my statement. The platform idolater is quite different from the actual idolaters.

If "the tree is known by its fruit", then one can boldly say that idolatry is a tree which has never yielded good fruit. The horrible and most scandalous system of Devadasis and Murlis, the nauseating scenes at the temple of Kali at Calcutta and one thousand and one other evils which Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayanand and so many other Hindu saints, by no means less patriotic than swami Vivekanand, have so honestly pointed out would not have darkned the Hindu civilization if the non-Aryan and non-Vedic element of idolatry had not crept into Hindusim. Truth is the best of patriotisms and we do not serve our country if we minimize, tolerate, or applaud our weaknesses and try to whitewash evils.

We have elsewhere fully shown that

idolworship is quite different from the mental image of the observed objects or mental conception of absotract things. It is a pity that such an eminent man as Swami Vivekanand should have confused the two. His advocacy of symbolization is misleading, to say the least of it. Go to any temple and look at any idol-worshipper there and you will have to admit that the poor worshipper has nothing to do with "keeping his mind fixed on the Being to whom he prays." Swami Vivekanand imagines an ideal worshippers and imposes his qualifications on the actual idolater, who, poor fellow, does not know the niceties the Swami speaks of.

It is again wrong to say that the Hindu does not abuse any one's idol. The feuds between the Hindu idolater and the Jain idolater and the Saivite and the Sakta are too common to be forgotten.[1]

Once a gentleman came to me and com-

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(१) हस्तिना ताडयमानोपि न गच्छेज्जैनमन्दिरम्।

Do not go to a Jain temple, even if you are at the point of being crushed by an elephant.

(2) भवव्रतधरा ये च ये च तान् समनुव्रता:।
पाषण्डिनस्ते भवन्तु सच्छास्त्रपरिपन्थिन:।।
मुमुक्षवो घोररूपान् हित्वा भूतपतीनथ।
नारायणकला: शान्ता भजन्ति ह्यनसूयव:।। (भागवत्)

plained that the Jains were taking out a procession of their naked idols through the streets of a town. I pointed out to him that the idol of Siva is as naked. The gentleman felt nonplussed and went away. Other parts of the statement have been dealt with elsewhere and do not need repetition.

....

"Those who worship Siva are hypocrites and enemies of true scriptures. Those who desire salvation should renounce the ficrce-looking Siva and devoutly worship the blissful aspects of Visnu."

(*Bbagvata*)

(3) विष्णुदर्शनमात्रेण शिवद्रोह: प्रजायते।
शिवद्रोहान्न सन्देहो नरकं याति दारुणम्।।
.............तस्माद्वै विष्णुनामापि न वक्तव्यं कदाचन।

(पद्मपुराण)

The Very Sight of Visnu leads to the Hostility of Siva the hostilityof Siva undoubtedly leads to horrible hell...........therefore nobody should ever recite the name of Visnu.

(*Padma Purana*)

यस्तु नारायणं देवं ब्रह्मरुद्रादि देवतै:।
समं सर्वैर्निरीक्षेत स पाषण्डी भवेत् सदा।।
किमत्र बहुनोक्तेन ब्राह्मणा येप्यवैष्णवा:।
न स्प्रष्टव्या न द्रष्टव्यान वक्तव्या: कदाचन।।

(पद्मपुराण)

Prama ahansa Ramakrishana's example is often quoted as the most spiritual person and still an idolater. His life is so mystic and so mystified by others especially by swami Vivekanand who was his disciple, that we forbear discussing personalities.

Let us leave the philosopher idolater here. The preacher of idolatry is a different being. He invents arguments where no arguments are admissible. He tries to make a case out of no case. His professional polemics actuate him to have recourse to hair-splitting. He is not a seeker-after-truth, but a seeker-after-difficulty. He has to keep a hold upon his followers and he manages to do so at all cost. His arguments are very often self-contradictory and at times frivolous. Let us examine a few of them:-

No. 10

"*Just as certain visible forms of letters rep-*

....

That man is a hypocrite who looks upon God Visnu with an eye of equality with Brahma, Rudra and other Gods. why talk much. Suffice to say that even Brahmans who are not Vaisnavites, should be neither touched nor seen nor talked to.

(Padma Purana)

resent visible sounds by supposition, or a dot on the blockboard represents the formless and magnitude-less geometrical point, in the same way, we can suppose visible representations of the invisible and formless God."

The analogy is false and is based upon the mistaken notion that *anything can be supposed as the representative of anything.* First of all, the question of representation arises only in case of absentees. Objefct present before us need no represetation. God, being omnipresent, there is no need to have a substitute for Him. Secondly the *representer and the representee should have something common between them in order to represent the particular feature which belongs to both.* The geometrical magnitudeless point and the gross point on the paper both have the common feature of forming lines and surfaces. Similarly letters and sounds are the elements of which words and phrases are composed. The written and the spoken languages run parallel and tally with each other from point to point. Hence the represention. In case of idolatry no common feature is coneceivable, nor the idolater conceives it in his practical life. The analogy has no reference to actualities and shoots over the mark. Not to speak of the representation of formless things by means of gross

things, even every gross thing cannot be supposed to represent every other gross thing. You can suppose a mountain to be represented by an elephant, when you mean to show its height but you cannot suppose it to be a well or a glass of water though both have forms. The real point generally missed in this argument is the absence of special feature to be represented. This is an argument too commonly forfarded from the platform and the most misleading because of the intricate nature of the analogy.

No. 11

The argument which is frequently alleged in support of idolatry is that *"those who believe God to be omnipresent, as declared by the doctrines of the Vedant, are required by the tenets to such belief, to look upon all existing creature as God, and to show divine respect to birds, beasts, men, women, vegetables, and all other existences, and as practical comfort to such doctrines is almost impossible, the worship of figured gods should be admitted."* This misrepresentation, I am sorry to observe, entirely serves the purpose intended, by frightening Hindoos in general from attending to the pure worship of the supreme Regulator of the Universe.[1]

No. 12

Another argument is, that *"No man can have, as it is said by the Sastra, a desire of knowledge respecting the supreme Being, unless his mind be purified; and as idol worship purifies men's it should be therefore attended to."* I admit the truth of the first part of this argument-but I must affirm with the Veda, that purity of mind is the consequence of divine worship, and not of any superstitious practices.[2]

No. 13

The last of the principal arguments which are alleged in favour of idolatry is, that it is established by custom. *"Let the authors of the Vedas, Puranas, and Tantras, it is said, assert what they may in favour of devotion to supreme being, but idol-worship has been practised for so many centuries that, custom renders it proper to continnue that worship."* It is however evident to every one possessed of common sense, that custom or fashion is quite

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1 Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Centenary works (page 75)
2 Ibid, p. 75

different from divine faith: the latter proceeding from spiritual authorities and correct reasoning, and the former being merely the pursuit of vulgar caprices.[1]

No. 14

" Idol- worship is the legacy of our forefathers. We ought not to feel ashamed of it before the foreigners whose own practices are some of them as indecent or as credulous."

First of all, it is wrong to say that our forefathers were all idolaters. Idolatry was quite unknown in the times of the Vedas, and even in the Brahmanas and later-books you do not find it in this gross form. But it is a mistaken patriotism to cling to our weaknesses simply because they are ours. We must remember that so many of our religious leaders and reformers raised their voice against idolatry. Their legacy is not idolatry and the worship of one God. They opposed idolatry not because foreigners laugh at us, but because it is bad. It has ruined other nations and is ruining the Hindus. Nothing is so ruinous as superstition. The following extract may be read with interest:-

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1 *Ibid, p 75*

" The Egyptain religion perished because it was latterly dominated by a persistent theriolatry and a mass of myths about gods, rather strange in a people otherwise so advanced in civilization. The same is the case with Assyrian, Babylonian and Teutonic religions. In Greece speculation became secular at a very early time and philosophy pursued a career independently of religion, with the effect that the popular faith was reared on Homeric tales, not always ethically palatable or philosophically sound. The best minds were obliged to evolve personal faiths: and while most of them probably conformed outwardly to the religion of the state, they were inwardly alienated from it and did not think it worth their while to waste their philosophic labours on futile popular legends. The Romans, not much noted either for their religions or for their philosophic originality, gathered gods from all corners of their far flung empire without much reference to their compatibility and among them also the best minds sought personal solace in ethical speculations unrelated to popular religion-Buddhism could spread so rapidly in Japan because the myths of the Kojiki could not supply enough spiritual food to the thinking mind of the island race. Today, for the same reason., *in India the religion of the Puranas has grown shame-faced and*

is failing to hold the undivided attention, interest and devotion of the ethicist and the philosopper."[1]

No. 15

"Idolatry gives a sense of security. When we come across a temple, we feel that there is some divine power, which protects us."

The sense of security and trust in God can best be achieved by the contemplation of God's work that surrounds us at all times and at all places. The sense of security derived from idolatry is deceptive and leads to superstition. Idolaters have much more easily fallen a prey to foreign attacks than non-idolaters. When Mahmud of Ghazni broke the idol of Somanatha the priests and their Ksattriya devotees wasted a long time in the superstitious expectation that Somanatha would rise and rout the foe in a twinkling of the eye. The ksattriyas of those days were not so weak as not to be able to guard the country from the inroads of the moslem invaders. What made them weak was the false hope that stone- gods were sufficient to save them. And the weakness of the Hindus was the strength of the Moslems. The latter knew

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1 Hari Das Bhattacharya's "Foundations of Divine Faiths," pp. 20-21.

that those who depended upon tinsel gods for their safety could be easily subdued. Even now the Hindus lose ground because of this false sense of security. What could you expect of a nation which has to take care of its deities as of chattel? A Hindu carries his God in his neck, or in his pocket or in a box and has much ado in protecting it. The constant anxiety of protecting his deities and his temples takes away all courage from him. He is the protector of his God and not the *vice versa*. The cases of the theft of idols and their ornaments are not rare. When the idol is broken or dishonoured, people naturally lose faith and crafty priests fabricate false stories. For Example, The Idol at Benares was thrown into a well by some one, either by a moslem invader or by a priest who wanted to save it. Later on it was announced that the God, not liking to see the face of the unbelievers, hid Himself in a well. Such false stories are too common and are creating mischief among the masses. So long as the Hindus will remain idolaters they cannot be a strong nation. Whatever strength they may gain from other sources, it will all remain temporary and will fail them at the time of difficulty. Idolatry is a cancer in the body-politic of the Hindus. Different idols have different set of devotees which constantly fight among themselves and can be never united. The

Hindu has much less to fear from outsiders than from his own men, because there are disuniting elements in the society whose force it is foolish to ignore. Let us admit that the Hindus are very very religious. But we must also admit that religiosity in their case mostly means vanity, superstition, misguided charity, sectional jealousies and gross animosities. The little good that is left is only negligible.

No. 16

"Idolatry can never leave humanity. Even Moslems and Christians are idolaters."

It is true that most christians worship the images of christ, Mary and angels. It is also true that the Moslems hold the Black Stone at Mecca (Sang-e-Aswad") sacred and kiss it. But these are the remnants of old idolatry which mohammed the Prophet of Islam, could not shake off for some reasons. There is no doubt that he was anxious to spread the worship of one God. But being unacquainted with higher teachings of the Upanisats and the Vedas, he could only make a Halting reforms. The sijda (Bowing down) of the Moslems shows that though the idol has been taken away, the fashion of bowing down before the idol is still the same. It is the remnant of the

old Arab customs. As to the tomb worship which is notoriously common among the Moslems, it must be admitted that it is the weakness of the moslems as much as of others and has done them the greatest loss. Moslems and christians could have shaken off idolatry altogether, had they not been obsessed with the false idea that Mohammad and Christ had a share in the divinity. This is their basic weakness and does not allow them to rise higher. The teachings of these great men are thrown in the background and their personality comes into relief. A moslem does not know what life is and what death is. He has a superstitious belief that the soul of the dead has not entirely left the body. Therefore, it is that he clings to the grave of his relations and saits as much as the Hindu to his Gods.

Moreover, we should remember that what is evil is evil whether it be in Hinduism or Islam or elsewhere. An evil cannot be good, simply because it is found among others. The seriousness of the disease does not become negligibel because so many are its victims; it is rather an epidemic and needs special attention.

No. 17

" Idolatry serves as a stepping-stone in the attainment of God."

The analogy is again wrong. The steppingstone brings you nearer and nearer the top, but an idolater remains idolater throughout his life, unless some force shakes him up and points to him the error he is involved in. It is pious deeds and right sort of teaching alone that can serve as steppingstone for the realization of God. Image worship is a stumbling-block and not a stepping-stone.

No. 18

"Idols do have some divinity in them, otherwise so many miracles ascribed to them will be impossible."

Impossible they are and false too. There is no truth whatsoever is the so-called miracles. It is cheating pure and simple. Swami Dayanand in his 'Satyartha Prakasa' has clearly shown the hollowness of miracle-mongering so very prevalent in the Hindu temples.[1] An intitution which emboldens crafty priests to cheat the public in this way needs the condemnation of all thingking persons.

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1 Vide Chapter XI. He mentions the following miracles:-

I. The miracle of 'Lat Bhairava' in Benares, when

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No. 19

"Idol-worship or Man-worship are exuberances of Bhakti or devotion. They develop the devotional side of man."

Bhakti or devotion is not a blind thing. Blind devotion is very dangerous and leads to horrible consequences. Bhakti movements which rose from time to time in India are responsible for vilest immoralities the world has ever known. We quote here a relevant extract from loard Ronaldshay's "The Heart of the Aryavarta":-

" The Sahajia cult which was one of the products of the period which followed on the decline of

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Aurangzeb attacked the temple and swarms of bees rising from these set his army to flight. 2. The image of Siva concealed itself in a well and that of Benimadhava in the house of a Brahman because they did not like to see the face of the unbelievers. 3. The miraculous cooking of rice at Jagannatha first in the topmost pot and then downwards. 4. The prolongation of the Lingam at Ramesvaram at the time of pouring Ganges water on it. 5. The image of Kalia Kanta smoking a tobacco pipe. 6. The flight of the image of Dakorji in Dvaraka with a devotee. 7. The Jvalamukhi (Volcanic eruptions) in Kangra etc. tec. (Swami dayanand in his "Light of Truth," Chapter XI).

buddhism, is a case in point. The cult was based upon the idea that in sexual love, there is a higher side pointing to love divine and that through the former is to be found the path leading to the latter. In theory no doubt it was worship rather than love in its more worldly sense that it was sought to inculcate; *object of such romantic attachment was young and beautiful women, and when further it was held that with a man's own wife the highest results could not be expected,* the dangers of the creed became sufficiently obvious- poems composed by a Buddhist scholar, Kanu Bhatta late in the 10th century were by no means free from obsenity. (page 146)

"A more spiritual emphasis was given to the teaching of the cult and of that of the kindred Parakiya Rasa Cult of Vaisnava Theology by Chandidas, a Brahman poet of the 15th century. 'One who has crossed the region of darkness (passion) can alone have the light of Sahajia he cries. The story of his own romantic love for Rami, a Washerwoman, and one therefore, whom he was debarred by caste from associating with is well known: but while he addresses her in the fervent language of a lover, he also declares, 'my love for your maidenly beauty has not any element of physical desire in it.' 'This love', he says 'may be attained by one who can suspend the highest peak of

mount sumeru by a thread or bind an elephant with a cobwed.' (page 147)

" ....Thirty authors in old Bengali literature who acclaim the principles of Sahajia 40..... different books .....about two hundred years prior to the advent of the British Rule (see Rai Bahadur Dinesh Chandra Series 'History of Bengali Languages and Literature').

"It goes without saysing in their earnest efforts to attain salvation by worshipping young and beautiful damsels,many a youth turned moral. Wrecks Chaitanya and other great fifteenth century leaders of the Vaisnava community vehemently condemned the cult, the former sternly forbidding his followers to associate with women. And with all his admiration for the philosophy (of tantras) Sir John woodroffe does not deny the abuses to which they have given rise. (p 180) 'If then, Dr. Coomarswamy's statement of the intended significance of the sex symbolism in Indian religious art may be a accepted, it is less easy in the light of what has been written above to accept the implication that the *influences which have been responsible for this particular phase of Indian art have been wholly spiritual."* (See sir John Woodroffe's Introduction to the Mahanirvana (of tantra)." (Ibid. p 150).

In my opinion Lord Ronaldshay has used a very guarded and sober language. The practice, as well as the so-called philosophy behind it, requires a very strong condemnation of the sane world.

CHAPTER XIII
THE YOGA

We appear to have in this book devoted too much space to idolatry. But the fact is that idolatry has got a sort of monopoly in the realm of religion and has usurped the throne of true worship. Of all the anti-theistic tendencies in the world; idolatry is the most harmful, more than even atheism; because while atheism is confined to a few persons and to a particular period only, the sway of idolatry is very wide and much more abiding. History shows that only a few individuals can be atheists. Constant and consistent atcheism is almost unknown. But idolatry crushes the very germs of spirituality and produces in its victim a peculiar mentality, whereby he becomes a lotuseater, ever satisfied with his lot and unwilling to improve. He loses all appetite for finer things and refuses to rise higher. No healthy plants can grow as long as weeds abound, and idol-worship is very prolific and dies very hard. The atheist is always in an argumentative mood and there is every likelihood of his being reclaimed one day. But the idolater loses faith in the efficacy of reasoning by virtue of his training. For him rationality is no virture. The inculcation of true system of worship needs the purging of hu-

man mind from the foreign matter which idolatry has brought in. No doubt., it is difficult. But worship is also a difficult process. God's realization is not a cheap thing. It is the highest aim *in* life and of life, and demands price.

The vedic scriptures have recommended Yoga for the purpose. In this chapter we propose to give a few salient points of *Yoga.*

What Yoga is not easy to explain. There are many systems of Yoga prevalent in the world. But you can roughly define *"Yoga as a mental training, which if fully attained leads to the automatic realization of God."*

The basic principle of "Yoga" is that worship is not a physical action. You cannot force it upon anybody. Mind has a few innate weaknesses which do not allow its possessor to look into his inner-self and relize the Great self which resides still deeper within that self.

These weaknesses have been roughly divided into three classes (I) *Mala* (मल) or dirt, (2) *Viksepa* (विशेष) or agitativeness, (3) *Avarana* (आवरण) or curtain. The language is all through metaphorical and the metaphor has been taken from the mirror. A mirror ceases or function properly under three circumstances; either when it is dirty, or when it is in con-

stant motion or when something else comes between it and the looker. Similarly, they say, that we cannot see God when our mind is impure, or constantly in motion or there stands something else between Him and ourselves. By the dirt of mind we mean impure thoughts which continue rising from moment or moment without any break. They leave no margin for nobler ideas. These impure thoughts make the mind fidgety. Just as strong winds agitate the surface of the sea, similary the course of wordly events through which we pass constantly effects over mind and distrubs its equilibrium. It is everybody's experience that no deep thinking is possible at a noisy place. Why? because sounds coming from all round draw the mind towards themselves and put a strain on man's brain. The third is *Avarana*, Literally meaning curtain. Though the soul and God live together and are nearest each other, there is a curtain of ignorance which does not allow the soul to think of God. Engrossed in worldly affairs, it ignores the supreme Being.

These three weaknesses have three corresponding remedies. '*Mala*' or dirt can be removed by reding or hearing about God and Good conduct. Ungodly, non-godly and anti-godly atmosphere from which we generally derive our inspiration makes us

either sceptic about God's existence or totally forgetful of Him. In both cases we lose spiritual appetite and engross ourselves in matter. Either instinctively or deliberately we keep ourselves engaged in administering to the wants of the body, quite neglecting the soul in our incessant worldly engagements. It never strikes us even for a moment that we have any such thing as soul and that it demands any attention from us. Our conduct is much affected by our mentality. Leaving aside what is, by common consent of the society, known as bad conduct, even good conduct which does not draw upon us the condemnation of the world, betrays our mental vision. A theist and an atheist do not think likewise, nor do a trained, an untrained and an illtrained theist. The difference in their thoughts cannot help colouring their words and deeds. For everything we do, from ordinary daily routine work to social and political engagements of highly serious natrue, there is a psychology behind. The mental trend of individuals and nations is apparent to any close observer of their history. The wave of the nineteenth century materialism which originated in the west and swept over the whole world could not help colouring all our social and political institutions. Our whole outlook of life seemed to have changed. Our schools and colleges tought our youths

that all talk about God, soul or spirituality was a nonsense and worship, a tissue of daranged or misguided brains. The result was that the whole religious atmosphere was vitiated and even the most orthodox began to waver. No true worship is possibel in such environment. If we wish to have good result, we ought to change the atmosphere.

For this we have mentioned two things, first hearing or reading about God. *Kathas* or reading of suitable religious books changes our outlook and clarifies our ideas about god. Singing of hymns or hearing them has been found of highly practical value. It inspires us. The second thing is good-conduct. We do not mean here any discussion about theories of Ethics. Every worshipper or devotee knows what good conduct is. Evil deeds not only touch our superficial life, they go deep and percolate to the inner most bottom of our self. Patanjali, the father of the *Yoga*, has recommended to the beginner of yoga the observance of *yama* and niyama for the purpose. The importance of *Yoma* (यम), and *Niyama* (नियम) lies in their capacity to remove *mala* or dirt. Ordinarily speaking they are usual rules of conduct. On them depends the success of our worldly life. But their close and studied observance also prepares a man for receiving spiritual training. Without their observance

a man remains unfit to perform Yoga.

The *Yamas* are five :-

(I) *Ahimsa* or (non-violence), (2) *Satya* (truthfulness), (3) *Asteya* (un-thievishness), (4) *Brahmacharya* (control of carnal desires), (5) *Aparigraha* (non-attachment).

The *Niyamas* are also five:-

(1) *Saucha* (cleanliness), (2) *Santosa* (contentment), (3) *Tapas* (austerity), (4) *Svadhyaya* (Study of sacred books), (5) *Isvarapranidhana* (resignation to God's will).

These rules of conduct are the first requisites of worship, its a, b,c, d. One that is anxious to realize God by performing Yoga will have regard for all life, will do no violence to anybody and will abstain from flesh or other kinds of food which can be got only by injuring others. He will be unthievish and truthful as falsehood is a spiritual poison in whatever form it may be. Non-violence is the root virtue, as all evils, whether falsehood or theft or greed or lust, do some violence to some beings and the vow of non-violence, if strictly observed, serves as a preventive as well as a cure.

....

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेय, ब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहा यमा:।
शौचसन्तोषतप: स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमा:।
(योगदर्शन, साधन पाद सूत्र 30,32)

The first five virtues called *Yamas* have a social tinge while the five *Niyamas* are, more or less, personal and prepare a man for fighting the temptations which arise in the observance of the former (*Yamas*).

In Yoga, the importance of these ten principles cannot be exaggerated. They are the essentials for a beginner. The *Mala* or dirt of which we spoke in the beginning of this chapter becomes less and less by practising them, and the practiser gets not only a consciousness, but a sort of instinctive habit for the performance of his daily duties. It is a sovereign remedy for the suppression of lower impulses which are an enemy to worship.

The ground having been prepared, now comes the question of harmonizing the tendencies of mind and bringing about a perfect mental equilibrium. If the practiser has started the observance of the *Yamas* and *Niyamas* in right earnest, he will begin to feel a sort of lull in mental storms which used to torment him highertofore. But this is not all. Internal and more powerful process is required. Mind is too powerful to be trifled with. The Gita says:-

" O Krsna, Mind is fidgety. It can be controlled with a great difficulty. I regard its control as difficult as that of wind."

For this Patajnali recommends the remaining six stages of Yoga, called asana or bodily posture, *pranayama* or breath- exercises, *pratyahara* or sensecontrol, *dharana*, or concentration, *dhyana* or contemplation and *samadhi* or composure.

These six together with the first two, i.e., *Yama* and *Niyama* form the eight steps of Yoga*. *Yama* and *Niyama* can be practised by anybody if he is a little careful about his conduct. They touch all the actions that we do, big or small. There are times when too strong temptations come in our way and we feel embarrassed. These are critical moments and need combating. For the beginner the best way is to fly such ordeals till he gets strength.* But how long can a man keep aloof ? These are preliminary precautions and not an end. There should be a gradual rise up. The stronger the temptations, the greater is the credit of facing them. The greater the triumph, the more

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1 चंचलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद् दृढम्।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम्।। (गीता 6/34)
**यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणध्यानमाधयोऽष्टावङ्गानि।*
(योगदर्शन साधनपाद, सूत्र 26)

** *Who quits the world where all temptations try,*
And as 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly.
(Goldsmith in the Deserted Village)

achievements. Thus now rising, now falling, now wavering, now girding up, one can go up and up on the ladder of good conduct, till it becomes inconceivable for him to fall to any aberrations. This requires patience and persistence.

Asana, *Pranayama* and the following four steps need the help of an expert preceptor. These are exercises which have to bwe performed daily for a fixed period of time. Caution is required in their performance and a little mistake can result in incurable diseases.

The powers that come to a Yogi have been described in different books, in the most tempting language, and are in some cases fabulous too. The result is that scores of Yoga systems have sprung up, most of which have nothing to do with worship or spiritual attainments. Some of these (for example, certain *Asanas* or bodily postures) are mere physical exercises and to call them Yoga is nothing short of cheating. Just as other departments of life have their cheats and pick-pockets, so has Yoga. The market is full of exploiters and many a youth has suffered a great loss at their hands. Therefore, one should be on one's guard. The offer to show so-called divine light, or to make God's voice heard in a few days' practice is a tempting snare which every student of Yoga has to

avoid. Most persons hanker after Yoga, not because they are lovers of God, but because they think that Yoga would earn for them many worldly enjoyments of grosser type. *Asanas* have got a great notoriety in this respect.

The *Asana* which forms a step in our Yoga is not a difficult thing and does not need bodily tortures. Its aim is to provide the best position for mental concentration. Patanjali defines Asanas as-Sthira Sukhamasanam *i.e., "An agreeable, firm posture." The most essential thing in *Asana* is its firmness, or absence of even the slightest motion, that might cause disturbance. The practiser should try to compose his thoughts from before. He should sit still and try to control his breath. Some persons seem to think that to sit erect is not a proper posture for devotion and that the devotee should bow down his head in all humbleness. Such objectors forget that worship is not the concern of the head or hands, but of mind. Whatever the posture of the body, as long as there is no concentration of mind, nothing can be achieved. The erect and still posture, with back-bone straight up, enables a man to control his breath better than any other posture. Bowing down in different postures

* स्थिरसुखमासनम् (योगदर्शन, साधनपाद, सूत्र 46)

may be necessary when you worship a man or an image. God has to be realized within.

Pranayama is a breath-exerciese. Mind and breath are so related to each other that the control of one leads to the control of the other. When a man's attention is concentrated upon a certain thing, his breath is held up. This is a common experience. Pranayama is based upon the physiological fact that when the motionlessness of the mind leads to the motionless-ness of breath, the reverse will also be true. That is, if you could stop your breath, you will hold up your mind also.

All this requires a continual practice. It takes years to train the mind. Ordinary persons stop at the stage of Pranayama and cannot proceed further. But a true yogin must persist. Between pranayama and samadhi there are many stages; many critical points arise in the way and the journey is by no means smooth. But after a long practice the state of samadhi or complete composure is reached, and the practiser begins to realize automatically the presence of God. What the form of realisation is, no body can tell in words. It is neither a subject of lecture nor of verbal description. It is realisation. There is a difference in Yoga theoretical and Yoga practical. Real Yoga is difficult to teach and difficult to learn.

CHAPTER XIV
WHAT FOR MASSES?

Worship has two aspects, individual and social. Individuals can have training in Yoga. But that too, with different degrees of success. In no country and no period have Yogins abounded. Their number can increase when there are more facilities provided. But after all, it is an individual affair. The question is how an ordinary man should proceed in order to improve spiritually. What spiritual institutions can be recommended in order to secure healthy religious development of masses?

It is, no doubt, true that all persons are not fit for receiving high Yogic training. Nor are all persons fit for the full realization of God in this life. This holds good not only in case of religiosity but of all departments. How many persons are fit for science, philosophy, mathematics, engineering, sculpture, painting and other sciences or arts? Indeed, very few, Experts in the whole world can be counted on fingers. But there are scientists of different degrees and the knowledge they possess is useful for them and for others. A great physicist like Einstein or Max Planck is rare, but a coolie working in an electric-

supply company has also a slight knowledge of science and applies it for the benefit of the people. He may not be a researchist, he may not have discovered any thing new, he may not be acquainted with scientific methods, but for all practical purposes he uses science and handles scientific instruments. Similary a great architect and an ordinary labourer making a mud hut belong to the same department of life and are brethern in trade. Both of them contribute to the individual and social welfare though in different degrees. They have different capacities, are on different stages of development and achieve different degrees of success. The same thing can be said of Yoga or worship. A man trying to practise the five virtues of '*Yama*' is also a Yogin, though not much advanced. Advancement comes gradually. It may come in months. It may come in years. It may come in lives. It all depends upon the potentiality of a man, the circumstance in which he has been put and the efforts he can put forth. Some become graduates at the early age of sixteen, some at twenty, some at thirty, and some have to give up education at the very primary stage. But even these last named are educated in a limited sense and if rightly guided can scale the ladder of learning gradually and steadily. The practiser of the principle of *ahimsa* or non-violence, who ab-

stains from giving pain to others or using such things as come to him only through pain may be the lowest specimen of humanity and may possibly be unfit for higher spiritual teachings. But he is on the right path. He has begun and will gradually improve. He is better than a hypocrite and cheat who exploits The credulity of the people by displaying physical feats and posing as Yogin, as this hypocrisy will drag him down and down and minimize the chances of his ever attaining *samadhi*. The same holds good with other virtues, such as truthfulness, nonthievishness etc., etc. Some persons think that systems of Yoga have ignored common people and that they are meant only for the selected few. In one sence it is correct and in another quite wrong. If you have in view the highest stage, surely acme can be reached only by a few fortunate persons. Experts are very few indeed in every department of life. But to say that there is any human mass, however low in the scale of civilization or capacity, where you cannot begin Yoga, is wrong. Yoga does not begin with subtle pranayama practices. Pranayama is a much higher study. The real beginning is made with the rules of conduct, mentioned by Patanjali as the first two steps of Yoga. You call them simple moral code and see no connection whatsoever with these virtues and worship. The reason is

that you stop too short and do not push them further. You take them as the goal of life, while they are simply means to some end. Patanjali has given methods by which the observance of *ahimsa* etc., can be converted into worship ever by the most ignorant person.

One such method is *Japa* (जप) or recitation of the Divine Syllable *Aum* (ओ३म) . Patanjali says:-

*Tajjapas tadarthabhavanam**

"The recitation of Aum and the contemplation of its meaning."

This is very easy. Even a baby can utter 'Aum' Easily. It needs no sanskrit learning. You can teach it to a savage. If he is a worshipper. let him recite this syllable a hundred times daily. As to the second part of the Sutra, i.e. its meaning, this is also not difficult. Let him try to contemplate that 'Aum' stands for a great invisible power that is everywhere, knows all and is benign. These three ideas of God's presence, God's knowledge and God's benignness can be easily created in a devotee's mind by the observation of nature all round and reference to one's own self. You need no big templs or big paraphernalia. Sit anywhere in the morning after washing yourself and recite 'Aum'

* *तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम् (योगदर्शन समाधिपाद, सू0 28)*

, say, a hundred times. While reciting try to think that you are in the presence of the Almighty, who is your best friends. But remember that God will hear you only if you are kind to others, truthful, clean and clean-hearted.

The step next to the recitation of 'Aum' is the recitation of the *Gayatri Mantra* Which runs as follows:-

ओ३म भूर्भुवः स्वः। तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि। धियोयो नः प्रचोदयात्।।

(Yajurveda 3-35)

(ओ३म्) God (भूः) is support of all that is below; (भुवः) of all that is in the middle; (स्वः) and of all that is above. (धीमहि) Let us imbibe (तत्) that (वरेण्यं) excellent (भर्गः) glory (सवितुः) of the creator (देवस्य) God, (यः) who (प्रचोदयात्) my actuate or guide (नः) our (धियः) intellects.

The Gayatri is held as very sacred and can be repeated at least a hundred times daily. The most important thing in Gayatri is the prayer for the guidance of the intellects. The devotee should learn that the intellect is that best thing for which he can pray God. Some superstitious people think that mere recitation of the Gayatri brings them power. That is wrong. The

recitation of the Gayatri is a means of improving one's character and strengthening one's faith is God.

From the Gayatri a man may rise to Sandhya or prayers to be done individually both morning and evening.[1]

Besides individual worship, masses need something social also. Easy social prayers consisting of a few beautiful Veda Mantras can be arranged periodically, weekly or bi-weakly, in which the members of the whole society may gather at a particular place (call it temple or prayer-hall, as you like), and pray under the guidance of some religious preacher. This may be accompanied with vocal or intrumental music also. This is necessary to create and keep fresh the interest of the masses in matters spiritual.

There is one more thing that the Sastras or Vedic scriptures have enjoined. That is Homa or Havana. It is one of the daily unavoidable duties of the *Aryans* and should be performed both morning and evening. Those who find it difficult may get the Homa perfomed weekly or bi-weekly with the help of a Pandita. Ladies can be easily taught to perform Havana. There are small text books on the subject. But just as the recitation of 'Aum' is sufficient for a be-

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1 For Sandhya, see separate books.

ginner, the Havan can be performed in the beginning, only with 'Aum Svaha (ओ३म्) . Social havanas can be arranged periodically at public prayer- halls.

But one thing is very very essential. *Kathas* or religious discourses on easy and interesting subjects should be a very common practice. In these discourses the priests or panditas should make it a point to emphasize the need of good conduct and social virtues. The spirit of the whole thing has to be kept up.

This social and individual elementary training is expected to meet the minimum requirements and it is also possible that promising souls may come up and undertake further course.

An objection can be raised to what we have just suggested. The supporters of idolatry can complain that after acrimonious criticism of idolatry, we have again recommended those things which though not idolatry can be easily developed into idolatry. To this charge we plead guilty. We admit that anything can be abused. But if such a thing happens, it will be after people have forgotten the purpose and the right use of worship. Every house is open to inclemencies of weather and much more a simple mud hut. Even palaces need periodical repairs and if left to themselves can be a heap of ruins in the course of time.

Ordinary huts need greater care and may possibly require more frequent repairing. It is quite possible that the masses, if left to themselves, may fall back from the recitation of easy mantras or performance of Homa to the worship of images. But if religious leaders take a timely care of them, the evil can be easily avoided. But if after all sorts of precautions, anything amiss arises, it will be the duty of the persons of the age to see how best to cure it. Future fears do not justify our neglect of the present evils.

CHAPTER XV
THE LANGUAGE OF WORSHIP

There is one important point that deserves notice. The question is whether the prayer should be in the worshipper's own language or in some other language which has been sanctified by long usage or tradition.

This is an old question and has much literature. Among Christians there was a great difference of views between the Roman Catholics who emphasized the importance of Latin prayers and the Protestants who allowed the worshippers to use their mother tongue. Among the Hindus, too, the Orthodox lay stress upon the recitation of the Sanskrit Mantras, while common people regard it a waste of time to repeat un-understood formulas. Among the Arya Samajists, the controversy is going on, though not to any meancing extent. The commonsense view is that prayer should always be done in the worshipper' own language so that it might be perfectly understood. They say that prayer should rise from heart and should not be lip- deep. The question is not so easy. It involves principles. We have to decide

whether prayer is a means or an end by itself. The determination of the end will determine means also.

If prayer means simply asking something from God, then even mother-tongue is superfluous. Mere desire is sufficient. Just as God understands all language, He understands all minds too. What is the use of crying aloud "O God, give us our daily bread," in Latin, or English or in any language? God knows that you are hungry and He will give bread to you. But if prayer has some other end in view e.g., rising higher in the scale of spirituality, then your wishes should not be the only factor in determining the form or language of the prayer. We should try to see whether the process is helpful in our journey. People complained to Milton about the stifffiness of his poetry and requested him to write in easier strain. He is said to have replied that it was a question, whether he should drag himself down to the level of common people, or draw them up to his own level. If people are left to themselves in matters of prayer, they will try to drag God down to their level. They will say anything they like. Maulana Rum has given in his renowned Masnavi a story about a Beduin who was grazing his sheep and saying 'O God if I could meet thee, I would take they coat and cleanse it out of lice'. This shows the worshippers's love for God, but foolish love, the love

that wants to drag down God. In Hindu villages such anecdotes are very common in which a misguided devotion or even contempt for a God has resulted in the *darsana* of the God[1].

Such stories have no place in serious discussion. Most of them have been fabricated to deepen faith in laity. If the devotee's spirtual level is to rise, he should be taught to tune his wishes to the valid desirability of the object. He should not pray for any and everything. He should be taught as to what it the most proper object to wish and pray for in order to help his spiritual advancement. The set mantras which

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1 Near Allahabad, there is a small village Pandla famous for Siva's temple. Just as you enter the village you see another small temple, which has to be first visited before going to the main temple the villagers tell a story, There was a man who bore special contempt for the God Siva and would beat his image with shoes for a hundred times every day before he took any meals. This went on for years. One day the river was stormy and it was not safe for the man to keep to his routine. Still he risked his life, swam across the river and offered the image the usual strokes. God Siva was so pleased with his constancy that He gave the man His Darsana and ordained that every pilgrim should first visit the temple of the man and then of Siva Himself. Such stories are attributed to other places also.

are to be recited have been especially chosen to draw the attention of the worshipper to the high ideal to which he has to rise. Left to himself the devotee would lower down the level of his ideals according to his low impulses and the object of worship will be foiled. In social prayers, uniformity has also to be kept. This uniformity has its own value which cannot be ignored by any means. Social integrity of the society as a whole and its religious background need it. We do not hereby means that the devotee should not understnad the meaning of the prayer. That which is not understood is not only boring, but also useless. It makes the prayer a soulless dry forms. They worshipper must understand the meaning. He should also supplement it with the yearnings of his heart in his own language. But I am not for its substitution. Over and above the prayer done in set forms, the worshipper can invoke the help of God eighter silently or even in open words of his own. But if he forsakes the former and adopts the latter exclusively, there is a serious danger of his being standed. This is corroborated by histroy also. Many prayers which betray buffoonery are the result of such deviations from the right path.

CHAPTER XVI
SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

The writer being a worldly house-holder does not claim to teach recluses or those advanced in Yoga. His object is to give here a few practical suggestions only for those who want to gain something spiritual in the midst of their busy worldly life.

There are two main characteristics of worldly life; first it does not leave us, secondly it does not give us peace. Thus an ordinary man finds himself crushed between the inner and the outer conflicts. In the midst of his busy activities he runs to worship in order to obtain a glimpse of peace, but his rebellious mind drags him back. How to overcome this?

Over first helper in this connection is our own body. It is our duty to secure its co-operation. An unhealthy body is a very great obstacle in the way of the worshipper. But equally so is the body of the wrestler. We must strike the middle path and avoid extremes. We can divide our bodily precautions into three heads.

(a) *Food.* Let it be simple, but nutritious neither too coarse, nor luxurious. Butter, milk and fruit should form necessary ingredients. But they should

be in due proportion without straining the digestive capacity of the cater. Pungent and intoxicating things should be studiously avoided. Tobacco in all forms, all liquors, all flesh including fish and eggs, strong spices, are to be refrained from. Then avoid all foods which you cannot earn with clean hands. Cleanliness of food has two aspects, one physical and the other moral, A food may be quite clean and healthy from medical point of view, but if it has been earned through immoral means or by giving under pain to others, it is very unwholesome for a worshipper. Do not eat too much. Do not keep frequent fasts. Avoid strong purgatives. Anemas may be helpful, but only occasionlally.

(b) *Exercise.* It is necessary. But here too extremes should be avoided. Light exercises are enough. they should not be tiring, rather they should remove that exhaustion which is the outcome of too much rest. Open air walk is highly beneficial.

(c) *Rest.* There is nothing where the old well-known proverb 'Early to bed and early to rise'' holds so true as in the case of worship. Seven hours' sleep is recommended. The best time is between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m. Try to collect your mind before going to bed. Vigils should be avoided. Abstain from nocturnal amusements. Over sleep is as exhaustive as no

sleep. sleeping in the day time is bad. But during long and sultry days a short siesta at noon is expected to do you good.

Now comes the question of *Mind.* Just as a new or naughty horse is difficult to manage until you have a full control over it, similarly one has to be very cautious in case of mind. In worship, mind is everything. The beginner has to see that it is not disturbed by worries. A few hints may be given here:-

(1) Try to avoid those places or circumstances or occupations which upset your mind every now and then.

(2) If you cannot, at least be away from them within an hour from the time of worship.

(3) Form a habit of sitting silently and absolutely thoughtlessly for at least fifteen minutes every day.

(4) If you find the storm in mind too uncontrolable, pacify it by singing, to youself, in a moderately pleasing tone, some appealing hymn.

(5) See that you do not lose temper. If the nature of your beusiness brings you in contact with unbusiness-like people, find smoother ways to deal with them. A little tact and thoughtfulness on your part can overcome the difficulty.

(6) In conjugal relations, be very temperate.

But a little yeilding to your feeling, if they are really too strong, is better than overstrainging yourself. Foreced abstention is sometimes more harmful to the body as well as to the mind. But remember that this should not be an excuse for over indulgence.

(7) Even if, on a certain occasion, you find yourself indisposed and your mind unhelpful, do attend to your worship for formality's sake. Giving up outer activities on little pretexts proves harmful in the long run.

(8) When ill or confined to bed, think that God is the great healer. Have faith in Him.

(9) In times of extreme difficulty, remember God and invoke His help mentally.

(10) Try to be contented in your business, though by no means, unmindful.

CHAPTER XVII
SOME SELECTED PRAYERS

(1)

ओ३म् विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परासुव। यद् भद्रं तन्न आसुव।। *(यजुर्वेद 30/3)*

O Benevolent Inspirer, keep away all evils. Bestow upon us all that is good.

(2)

ओ३म् अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान्। युयोध्यस्मज्जुहराणमेनो भूयष्ठां ते नम उक्तिं विधेम। *(ऋग्वेद 1/189/1)*

O God, Take us along the right path to bliss. O Bright one, you know the minds of all. Keep away from us crooked sin. Profusely do we offer our salutations to Thee.

(3)

ओ३म् तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि।
धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्।। *(ऋ0 3/62/10)*

Let us imbibe the adorable effulgence of the Shining Inspirer. May He stimulate our intellects.

(4)

यत् किं वेदं वरुणं दैव्ये जनेभिद्रोहं मनुष्याश्चरामंसि।
अचित्ती यत् तब धर्मा युयोपिम। मानस्तस्मादेनसो देव रीरिषः।। *(ऋ0 7/89/5)*

O Lord, whatever offence we mortals have done against the holy ones, whatever laws of thine we might have inadvertently transgressed, do not crush us on account of that sin.

(5)

अग्ने व्रतपते व्रतं चरिष्यामि तच्छकेयं तन् में राध्यताम्।
इदमहमनृतात् सत्यमुपैमि।। *(यजुर्वेद 1/5)*

O Lord of Vows, I Wish to observe my vows. Make me so, that I may fulfil them. May I reach truth from Falsehood.

(6)

असतो मा सद् गमय, तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय।
मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय।। *(बृहदारण्यक 1/3/28)*

Lead me from false to true-lead me from darkness to light. Lead me from death to immortality.

(7)

यो देवोऽग्नौयोऽप्सु, यो विश्वं भुवनमाविवेश। य ओषधीषु यो वनस्पतिषु तस्मै देवाय नमो नमः।।

(श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद 2/17)

Salutation after salutation to that God who is in fire, in water and pervading the whole universe, who is in herbs and trees.

(8)

मूषो न शिश्ना व्यदन्ति माध्यः स्तोतारं ते शतक्रतो। सकृत्सु नो मधवन्निन्द्र मूलयाधा पितेव नो भव।।

(ऋ 10/33/3)

O my bounteous Lord, cares are consuming me Thy worshipper, as rats eat weaver's threads. O Almighty God, have mercy on us and be like a father to us.

(9)

इन्द्र कतुं न आ भर पिता पुत्रेभ्यो यथा। शिक्षाणो

अस्मिन् पुरुहूत यामनि जीवा ज्योतिरशीमहि।।

(ऋ0 7/32/26)

O Almighty God, give us wisdom as father gives to his sons. Guide us, Thou much invoked, in this our way: May we still live and enjoy the light.

(10)

मोषु वरुण मृन्मयं गृहं राजन्नहं गमम्। मृला सुक्षत्र मृलय।। *(ऋ0 7/89/1)*

O My Lord, may I not again and again come to this earthly body. O my protector, have mercy on me and help me.

(11)

यदेमि प्रस्फुरन्निव दूतिनं ध्मातो अद्रिवः। मूला सुक्षत्र मूलय।। *(ऋ0 7/89/2)*

O Lord, I am wavering in my mind like a wind-blown skin. O my protector, have mercy on me and help me.

(12)

कृत्वः समह दीनता प्रतीपं जगमाशुचे। मूला सुक्षत्र मूलय।। *(ऋ0 7/89/3)*

O Bright and Powerful God, through want of strength I erred and went astray. Have mercy on me, my protector, and help me.

(13)

अपां मध्ये तस्थिवासं तृष्णाविदज्जरितारम्। मूला सुक्षत्र मूलय।। *(ऋ0 7/89/4)*

Thy worshipper is thirsty even when he is in the middle of waters. Have mercy, my protector and help me.